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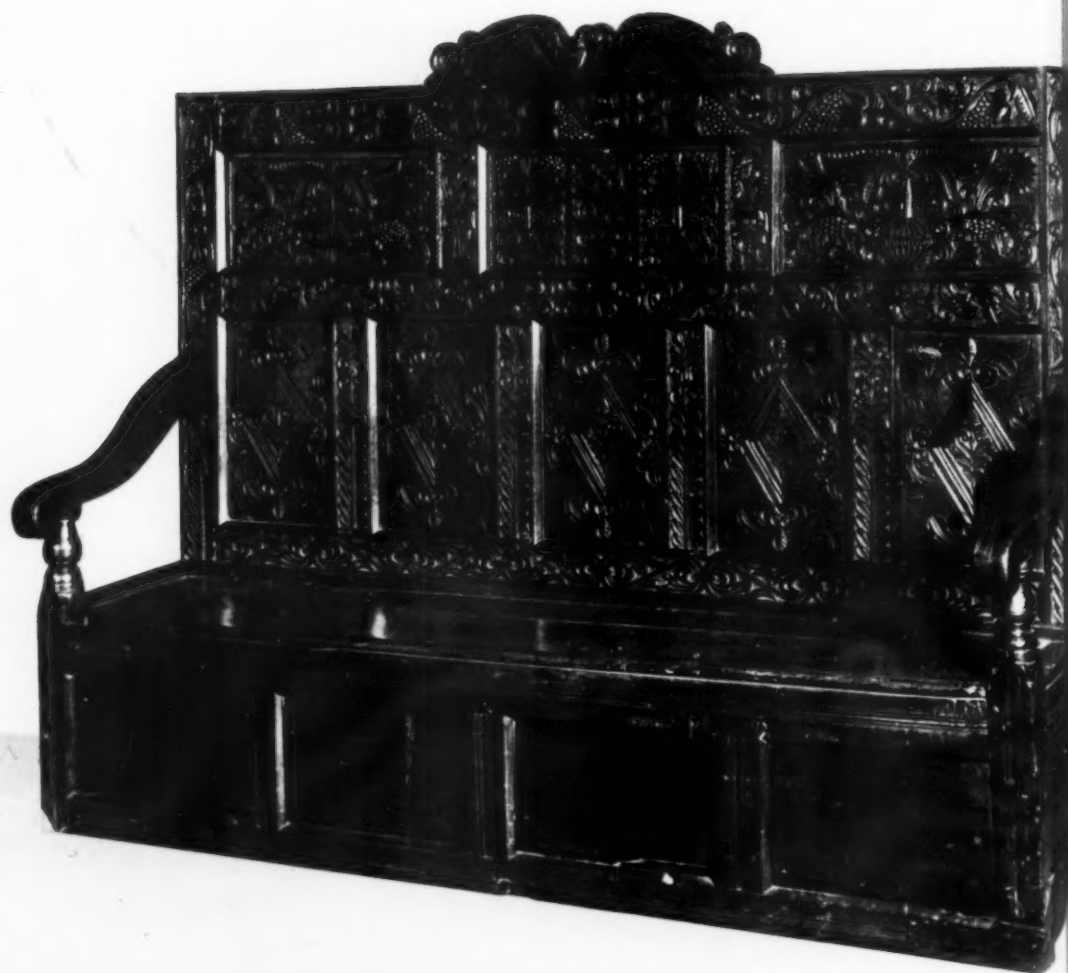
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CURRENT SHOWS AND COMMENTS BY PERSPEX

MAINLY ABOUT EPSTEIN

One's endeavour to keep one's little craft of criticism on an even keel and a steady course amongst the currents and eddies of the river of art, one is often driven to almost furious resentment at the inadequacy and impotence of words to express what the eyes, and they alone, convey to the mind. The Greeks called this "what" *idea*, i.e., *the thing seen*; but one knows the vicissitudes of this word and how much more it means and how much less it may convey.

The cause for this somewhat obscure preamble is the series of current shows visited by me this month and my endeavour to reflect upon them in tranquillity.

Let me begin with the two rivals of the Royal Academy, namely, the *Royal Society of British Artists* and the *Royal Institute of Oil Painters*, who are holding a combined exhibition at the Suffolk Street Galleries. The course of the R.B.A. has never run smooth—I know nothing of the history of the R.O.I.—but if I were a painter and exhibition-hungry I should be suspicious about any society beginning with the word "Royal"; the regal prefix in this context seems to be the very stamp of mediocrity. By that word I mean not only the timidities of the "middle-of-the-roads"—incidentally, no longer a safety-first device, now that the traffic has to keep to one side (in this country, prophetically, *the left*). I mean the meanderings of the jay-walkers who do not really know where they want to get to.

*... a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Else what's a heaven for?*

So Browning made the great second-rater, Andrea del Sarto soliloquize; but Andrea reached at least in a fixed direction; he knew his target, even though his bow had not enough tension, or, maybe, his arm was weakened by his passion for Lucretia—see on that question in its general application the 29th Chapter of Cennini's *Book*, written way back in the XIVth century, when Art was still something that depended on years of discipline rather than on—well what? There's the whole trouble.

At Suffolk Street, however, it seemed to me there was only an exhibition of uninspired jay-walkers, amongst whom the few who knew whither they were heading had rather heavy going. For example, A. Egerton Cooper's "Homage to Bellini," a most able bit of *serious* painting in the traditional spirit which its title implies was not given the place of honour it deserved. Amongst others who manifestly know their target are P. H. Padwick, who with his fluent and effortless technique knows exactly the kind of effect he wants to produce with his art; and the late G. H. Lenfesty, whose "Ponte Vecchio" has a poetically atmospheric—now *old-fashioned-seeming*—charm. Doris Zinkeisen's "Dress Rehearsal" is competent in execution and fairly sure in its aim; David L. Ghilchik's portrait of the late lamented George Parlyby is a good likeness of a "character" whom artists will long remember with affection. C. R. W. Nevinson's anonymous portrait of "a Dramatic Critic" is another good likeness of another well-known "character," happily still with

us; but the fact that this *pastel* figures amongst the *oils* tends to distract from its qualities. Other artists who at least know their aims and whose pictures one can look at with pleasure are Stephen Spurrier, Hesketh Hubbard, D. H. de Carteret and Leonard J. Fuller. S. Dennant Moss's "The Witness"—a view of St. Paul's amidst the ruins of the City—aims at impressive grandeur; but his technique makes the view look as if the skies over London had rained oil; and this brings me to

The Exhibition of *Recent Paintings by R. O. Dunlop, A.R.A.*, at the Leger Galleries. As may be deduced from the illustration which accompanies this notice, *oil* is also evident—at times, I think, much too evident—in Dunlop's art. He, too, glories in his medium which he uses with more—sometimes it seems to me too much more—daring. Nevertheless, his "The Thames at Chertsey" has a sky that Constable, the great student of clouds and wind and weather, would have approved of; just as he probably would have applauded the "handling" of the water in "The Thames at Shepperton Lock." Actually, however, Dunlop's aim is not identical with Constable's, as one may see in "Relaxation," a very ambitious semi-nude in which Dunlop's heaven seems nearer Titian's, Poussin's and Cézanne's in its search, respectively, for colour, design and solidity. In fact, it produces the effect of this latter quality with more success than I have noticed in Dunlop's art generally. It is certainly more *solid* than his "Self portrait," a favourite subject with this artist, who has the qualities of his defects: his emotional passion which I first saw dripping in pigment from his canvases under "the sign of the Hurricane Lamp" in the Chelsea of long ago. Dunlop goes for *colour* more than for any other quality, a joyous colour which we do not find in Constable, though it too is permeated with daylight, which so markedly separated Constable's art from the "brown Fiddle" tone of Sir George Beaumont's standards. Dunlop's "Holidays at Home" and "Autumn by the Thames" are a Jack Yeats-like riot of pigment from which the subject matter can only with difficulty be detached—but, and it is the great saving reservation, Dunlop is a painter, truly inspired and excited by his medium, who knows what he wants and leaves us to follow him in the relish of his emotional approach to nature.

Now we come to another enthusiastic painter with a passion for colour, but, by way of contrast, also for tidiness of design: *Edward Wolfe*, whose new exhibition is at the Redfern Gallery. Wolfe's *colour* differs from Dunlop's in that it is not atmospheric. It owes its inspiration to nature but it is as if Wolfe were trying to show Nature how much more luscious her palette might be if only she took a hint from the artist, with his greens and reds and violets. Thus most of his canvases are exciting, only that Wolfe does not truly *love* oil painting; he is really a *designer*. In his portrait design of an elegant negro—perchance a ballet dancer?—one is less aware of this fact than in most others in which Wolfe's reliance on calligraphic line to give firmness to his design is more evident. Wolfe does not build up form with colour in

Cézanne's manner, his art is nearer to Gauguin's, and in "Mexican Flowers," for instance, quite flat. Like Dunlop and unlike the "Royal" artists Wolfe knows his target, his bow has the tension of the craftsman and the steady aim of a good shot.

Next on my list are the two exhibitions at the Lefevre Gallery (now—let me remind readers—in New Bond Street). To take the minor event first: a collection of *Drawings by Corrado Cagli*. Cagli, now an American citizen, was born in 1910 in Italy. He is, it appears, well known in his native country as well as in the United States; this is his first one-man show in London. His drawings are done in a medium of which I am not sure: they look as if they had been drawn on the back of black carbon paper and thus transferred to the white—with very good effect—somewhat that of dry-points. They are figure compositions in the manner of the *cinque-cento* and done almost with the technical competence of that period. Though we learn that Caldo worked under Chirico in Paris, there is nothing, or almost nothing, that suggests the *Ecole de Paris*. "Trinacria," "For Bugle, Flute and 'Cello," "Campo di Marte" and "Mother and Child" may be quoted from the titles of designs as finger-posts to the mind of an intellectual, highly skilled artist.

And now to its very opposite, the *paintings of André Bauchant* in the adjoining section. Bauchant, of course, is all right so far as he goes, and that is not very far, though even so it goes further than most of the Royals already alluded to—further, that is in the *right* direction, though many of the "Royals" outdistance him in the wrong one. That is the trouble with the infinite distance of the ideal. In the wrong direction, the further you go the further you move from your goal, where the beginner on the right road, who has only just started his pilgrimage and seems outdistanced by those others, is in reality making headway. That is the case with Bauchant; but he is not a beginner any more; he, or perhaps others, trades on his shortcomings. A lot of nonsense seems to me to be talked about the work of this now old man (he was born in 1873) as producing "the best of contemporary popular painting," "characterized by its naïve and fresh outlook," "reminiscent of the primitives," and admired because he achieved all this "with only an elementary school education." Well, it just does not make sense; if, as seems to be the case, he was, during the last war, "a superintendent of map-making in Macedonia," an "avid reader of the classics," a visitor to museums "where he was particularly interested in Roman antiquities." I do not know how he became thus interested: it certainly cannot have been through his eyes or he would not *draw* so badly; and yet there is evidence for all to see that he *paints* plainly through the medium of his eyes, for his visual qualities are sensitive enough. But now examine such religious, mythological and classical compositions as "La Fuite en Egypte," "Apollon," "Le Serment de Brutus," and for one who is alleged to be a student interested in Roman antiquities the result is childish. He was, or is, a peasant; so was Giotto, so was Millet—so what? Is it an excuse for *incompetence*? The infant Mozart, a six-year-old, was an infant prodigy of competence. I know little of musical history, but I cannot find that admiration for Mozart's music has ever been praised with reservations and allowances for its shortcomings. Music does not know

its "Sunday" geniuses as, we are being persuaded, must be accepted in art. All the arts know only one test: competence, for the lack of which neither youth, age, illness or other incapacity is an excuse. It is only the competent who can adequately express what is in their minds. But so twisted have our standards of the visual arts become that painters and sculptors and modellers are often praised for expressing either what was not in their minds at all or for ideas which they were not competent enough to express.

How could such a thing have happened? The answer is because competence was looked for in the wrong direction. There were artists whose sheer *skill* was admired, irrespective of the fact that they were travelling on a road that in infinity would end infinitely distant from the truth. That was the road which most of the "Royals" trod, a road that is to say on which they could only progress by walking backwards. The right road can be found—is, in fact, found in infancy—the *poeta nascitur* of the Latin tag; but that does not mean that the born artist must remain "a little child" in his mind; he cannot do so physically and therefore he cannot do so metaphysically unless his is a pathological condition.

To appreciate Bauchant's innate sensibility for what is true food for the eye is one thing, but to elevate his shortcomings, to confuse them with authenticity under the pretence that they are characteristic of "folk art," is doing the cause of art great harm. That which alone deserves the name of great art is the result of passionate sensibility wedded to profound thinking and expressed with the utmost competence.

But our era had become so sick of artists travelling on the wrong road that it was grateful to those who, at any rate, were on the right one, which feels its way, like a child or a "Sunday painter" like Rousseau and Bauchant, and not with school lessons or æsthetic theory.

Such thoughts arose in my mind after a visit to the most important event in art of the month: Jacob Epstein's exhibition at the Leicester Gallery. It is the best show he has ever put up; but that it now seems so to me may be due to two facts, first that it is more homogeneous, consisting only of bronzes without the intrusion of carved stone, and secondly that Bauchant's immature amateurishness had opened my eyes wider to fundamental values.

For more than three decades Epstein's name and Epstein's work have been bandied about in the Press. Time and time again he has provided *sensations* and good "stories" of the kind the public is alleged to devour with gluttonous delight. He began his career on this side of the Atlantic with the "scandal" of his Oscar Wilde Memorial some thirty years ago, and there was that excellent story of Mrs. Grundy prevailing upon the authorities to send a Bobby to inspect his sculpture on the late building of the British Medical Association and to report on its moral quality. It seems laughable to-day, especially when one considers that it was probably the finest architectural sculpture on any London building. Then there was the scandal of "Rima," the only modern garden sculpture worth mentioning, but unmentionable in the presence of those who preferred, and still prefer, "Peter Pan," that monument of immaturity. And there were many other "scandals." Epstein has the gift for treading on the public's mental corns, whether deliberately or unconsciously I do not know; but it makes them

furiously angry and at times even physically violent. He certainly does not go out of his way to placate the enemies of his art, nor does he always make it easy for his friends to follow him in his trains of thought. That this should be so is natural, for, after all, we all are swayed by preconceived notions, by our ideas, however mediocre or foolish they may be. We believe ourselves to be judges of art, and of everything else; as indeed we all are, except in matters of fact. Yet it is more than foolish to judge by what one expects to see instead of by that which is before one's eyes.

So let me attempt to assess what was in front of my eyes as I visited the Exhibition. A smallish room, top-lighted; around the walls on pedestals a number, about twenty pieces, of bronze; on the floor of the room under the skylight a larger piece of the same metal. These are not matters of opinion but of fact; but unless my personal experience be an exception, it is also a matter of fact that the moment one enters the room with his eyes open the mind of the visitor is stimulated to lively activity. The bronzes cease to be pieces of metal and become representations of human figures *alive with thoughts and feelings*. It is impossible for the eye really to detach this life from the dead material; and this life engages our own, involves it in an activity caused and directed by the mind of the artist, and that activity is never concerned with trivialities; it is never soothed with easy and lazy day-dreaming fancies: the mind is compelled to serious thinking, busy with the "life" it sees *within* the bronze—the ideas *behind* the form.

Such an experience is rare: it never seems to happen in the Sculpture rooms of the Royal Academy or the Palais des Beaux Arts; and even in the Musée Rodin, which more nearly approaches the conditions of the one-man show, the eye soon tires of Rodin's very pronounced technique, especially his *half-peeling-out* of the figure from the marble. Epstein's "The Girl with the Gardenias" being the largest piece and standing free, naturally engages one's attention first. There is nothing *pretty* in this figure, such as the title might suggest. Her face is portrait like, her *type* is not classical, her movement and handling of the drapery indicates a dancing progression; there is nothing classical, yet she has the authenticity of Botticelli's "Primavera-Simonetta" or of such a figure as the IVth century B.C. "Nike" of Pæonius. It is this authenticity which is undeniable and lifts this bronze out of the ruck of current sculpture, even of the "modern" kind that seems to engage the mind in the contemplation of *abstract* form or the mere effect of resilient flesh qualities—of which, incidentally, the horrendous negress "Malimia" here is an amazing example. For that reason Epstein's work can neither be popular with the classical traditionalists nor with the "modernists" stupidly so labelled. Like all Epstein's work, "The Girl with the Gardenia" has life—the life that Epstein has given her, the life that she will preserve so long as the bronze lasts; and if its material were dug up again from the ruins of our civilization a thousand years hence, she would have that life still in every fragment of its material—that life and not the reflected one of a period or a school. You may like that life; you may dislike it, you may criticize it, you may do what you will—but you cannot deny it.

For those who find such musings too vague or too abstruse, there is his other work here, that which could

with justification be called portraiture. Take, for example, his portrait of "George Black, Esqre." I know, to my regret, nothing about the sitter, who is obviously a man of thought—obviously because it speaks from Epstein's portrait, it still lies in the hollow of his eyes and in the bronze will continue long after his human body has vanished; and the very fact that this life speaks from the unlikely material raises its significance to the transcendental plane. And so with the portrait heads of women from the dignified aristocratic lady referred to in the catalogue as "Sketch for a Portrait" to the "Ragamuffin" and his sister "Leda"; and so with the extraordinarily varied types of contemporary young womanhood. They are to us intelligible and penetrating examples of what one may fairly but inartistically call psycho-analysis and yet at the same time preserve the balance, unity and aloofness of works of art; but they are totally unlike in form-language to that of any other period or school.

To assess the significance of his art one need not have studied art-history, nor art-theories but—as with the art of a Rembrandt or, for that matter, the art of a Michelangelo—one *must* have thought and felt; one *must* know something of life from the *inside*, that is to say with intense subjectivity, and that in the last analysis is to experience mind as a universal power.

That explains Epstein's meaning, as it does the meaning of every great artist in whatever branch of thought mind may manifest itself.

And now, to finish up with something less strenuous. First, Mr. Paul Larsen's charming little exhibition of bygone times. There is a small head of an old man by Rembrandt at one end of its scale and a delightful water-colour of "Pigeon Shooting" by Henry Alken, Senior, at the other. In between is an interesting English picture of circa 1540, signed with the monogram H.W., it represents "the Clergy in Arms"; there is a vivid sketch, evidently an idea for a large picture, by Reynolds, though I do not for the moment know whether it was ever carried out. It represents "'Butcher' Cumberland receiving the news of Culloden," and is painted with more spirit and a lighter touch than one might expect. There are many good flower pieces, including a rare one by Caravaggio, rather different from the one in the Brera both in tone and in technique, the only other one I know. My personal choice here, however, would be an unpretentious little landscape by Hans Bol (1534-1593). It purports to represent "The Return of the Messenger from the Promised Land," recognizable as such only by a tiny *incident* in the right hand corner, a pleasing little note in reds against the blue and green of the Dutch scene.

Second: the 40th Annual Exhibition of Early English Watercolours at the Walker Galleries. This promises to be as good as its predecessors, judging from the samples I was able to see. There will be the famous masters of this our national *school*, Cozens, Turner, Varley, Cox, De Wint, Prout, etc., but what especially *intrigued* me was a view of a Coast Town, seen from above with an amazing mass of small detail. It is signed E. Hull and dated 1858. Who was this E. Hull and which town does it represent?

• • •

The Indices to Volume XXXIX, January to June, 1944, now ready, 2s. 3d., post free.—APOLLO, Mundesley, near Norfolk.

THE DECORATION ON XVIIITH CENTURY ENGLISH PORCELAIN

BY F. SEVERNE MACKENNA,

M.A., F.S.A.Scot.

PART I. ORIENTAL INFLUENCE

IT has been remarked with truth that it is possible to discover Continental or Oriental originals for practically every type of decoration found on XVIIIth century English porcelain, with the exception of transfer-printed ware, and the pursuit of these prototypes is an absorbing occupation which is too seldom engaged in by collectors. This is curious in view of the fact that so many collectors take a comparatively slight interest in the niceties of paste and glaze, but are content to form their collection on decoration alone. Yet they often take no trouble to discover the origins of the designs they are at such pains to acquire. It is my purpose in this and the two following papers to attempt to give a very rough outline of some of the main influences which affected the decorating of our English porcelain. It is manifestly

"the Dresden" and "the Seve," and certainly their wares carry on their surfaces every sign of kinship with the Continental productions when they do not imitate the Oriental direct. It is not to be imagined that a single original will be found for every type of decoration, for the decorators were not by any means averse from adopting a combination of features from widely differing styles. It is to this that we owe such successful decorations as the combination of Oriental powder-blue ground and Meissen flowers in reserves on much of our best Worcester. Such examples could be multiplied many times. But there is no doubt that the most potent influence in all European ceramic decoration came from the Orient, and it is with this section that I propose to deal first.



Fig. I. CHELSEA. Hexagonal teapot decorated in Oriental *famille rose* style. 1750-53. No mark. Height, 4.5 in.
In the Author's collection



Fig. II. WORCESTER. Dessert dish decorated in Oriental style with the *Bishop Sumner* pattern c. 1770. Mark, gold crescent. Length, 12 in.
In the Author's collection

impossible to give anything like a comprehensive account in such small space, but I think it will be found that a division of the subject into three groups—Oriental, Meissen and Sèvres—will suffice to cover practically every type of painting we are likely to encounter.

To understand how this is possible it must be recalled that Oriental porcelain, both Chinese and Japanese, had been made for many hundreds of years before any European succeeded in emulation, and that when Böttger did eventually discover the secret of manufacture in 1709, leading to the founding of the Meissen works, it was natural that the decoration as well as the paste of the Oriental originals should be adopted. Later the French factory at Sèvres, making a glassy frit porcelain, copied Meissen ware to a large extent, at the same time, like the Saxon factory, evolving its own styles independently of other influences. The English factories came very late on the field, and copied in their turn the Continental wares. This was done to such an extent that manufacturers in England frequently invited comparison with

The question of applied decoration as distinct from painted need not long delay us. Every collector is familiar with the applied prunus sprigs found on so much early Bow and less frequently on Chelsea and Longton Hall. This device is taken both directly from the Fuchien originals and indirectly from the same source through Meissen, St. Cloud and Capo di Monte; it was evidently a very popular form of decoration with the English market. Although other types of raised (moulded) floral decoration were painted with enamels, as, for example, in the case of the tall moulded Chelsea cups and water-pots and the goat and bee jugs, etc., I have never seen an instance of the prunus sprays being coloured. When polychrome decoration is found on sprigged specimens it usually takes the form of scattered blossoms or of the familiar peony and rock pattern associated with the *famille rose* type of Chinese painting.

Indeed the *famille rose* would appear to have exercised a particularly intense fascination on our china painters at this period, and some very beautiful results have been

DECORATION ON XVIIIITH CENTURY ENGLISH PORCELAIN

obtained from the use of the warm-tinted enamels on the soft glassy surfaces of our early wares. One of the most charming examples I have seen is that on the early Chelsea teapot shown in Fig. I, which the late Dr. Bellamy Gardner declared to be "the rarest of all Chelsea designs." A much less successful *famille rose* specimen formerly in my cabinets is a Bow bowl which is decorated both inside and out with the usual peony design, but in this case the excessive blueing of the glaze militates against a pleasing result. This form of decoration does not appear to have remained long in favour, as most of the examples which have survived belong almost entirely to the earlier Bow and Chelsea periods.

The *palette* of what we call the *famille verte* was also used extensively and for a longer period than the *rose*, and many well-known types exist, amongst them being the *kylin* pattern found on Worcester and on Cookworthy's Plymouth, and the pattern known as the *Bishop Sumner* which occurs on Worcester, of which a magnificent example is shown in Fig. II. The *famille noire* does not appear to have been attempted, nor, in its original form, the *famille jaune*, although there is no doubt that the yellow ground colour found first on Chelsea and later on all other *fabriques*, owed its origin indirectly to the yellow enamelled grounds on Chinese porcelain.

Even more important in their influence were the Japanese designs associated in the writings of European collectors with the name of the potter Kakiemon. Undoubtedly the best-known and most widely used was the *Partridge pattern*, found in practically every Continental and English factory; in the latter it lingered on in Worcester until a late period, becoming more and more debased as it receded from the whimsical and dainty original. Another striking device with which Japan provided us was the red tiger seen on a certain amount of the early Chelsea wares. He is usually shown exchanging compliments with an equally red and fearsome dragon

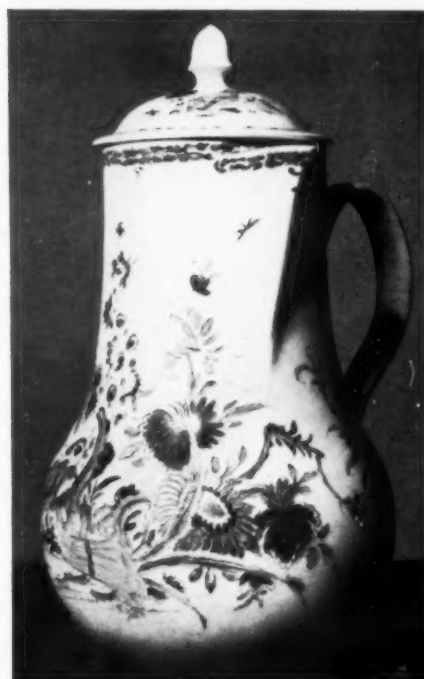


Fig. III. BOW. Coffee pot decorated in Japanese style, richly gilt. c. 1760. No mark. Height, 8.7 in.

Formerly in the Author's collection

which has sought refuge in a bamboo grove of totally inadequate dimensions. I have a tall leaf-moulded cup which I consider to be the earliest of my Chelsea specimens even amongst many of the very earliest triangle and 1745 marked pieces, which has the tiger alone, already very red and fierce; the bamboos are there too, but no dragon. I have never found this red tiger on anything but Meissen and early Chelsea, which is curious, as it is a striking design. Worcester employed many dragons, but they are tame creatures by comparison, usually draped over a branch, fluttering inadequate wings.

Long-legged birds, both standing and flying, were depicted amongst landscapes of pine trees, conventional chrysanthemums, etc., all in a restricted range of colour, predominantly iron-red, yellow, blue, green and gold. An elaborate scheme, without animals, is seen on the coffee-pot in Fig. III, from the Bow factory, and on the Worcester vase in Fig. IV, while a strikingly successful design of birds is seen on the Chelsea plate in Fig. V. The distinctive border in red and gold occurs very frequently and is often the only Oriental touch in an otherwise European decoration. This iron-red seems to have been thoroughly reliable in use and not open to any of



Fig. IV. WORCESTER Vase decorated in Japanese *Hizen* style. 1765-70. Square mark. Height, 8.9 in. In the Author's collection



Fig. V. CHELSEA. Octagonal plate decorated in Japanese style. The bird on the turquoise rock was afterwards copied at Worcester. 1753-54. Mark, red anchor. Diameter, 10.3 in. In the Author's collection

the objections such as over-firing, scaling, etc., which rendered other enamel colours uncertain.

Other much-used designs were derived from the elaborate diapers of the Japanese artists, usually with superimposed gilding and bearing reserved chrysanthemum badges and passages of formalised prunus, reeds and chrysanthemums. Several types are known on English wares, where they were variously described in contemporary catalogues as "fine old Japan pattern," "mosaik pattern" and "brocaded pattern." One which is the best-known of all began early in the Chelsea factory's history and remained into the Duesbury regime, and also made a short appearance at Worcester about 1770; like the *partridge pattern*, it gradually deteriorated. All the diaper patterns suffer from an over-elaboration and give a "busy" effect which is not always pleasing.

The term *India flowers* is often used in describing a type of decoration consisting of formal sunflower-like blossoms with yellow or gold centres and green and blue foliage found on many types of ware, particularly Worcester and Plymouth. Other favourite designs include flying foxes, flaming tortoises, birds of paradise and other odd-looking creatures, none more so than those in the



Fig. VI. PLYMOUTH. Chocolate pot decorated in Chinese style. c. 1770. No mark. Height, 6.9 in. In the Author's collection



Fig. VII. PLYMOUTH. Coffee pot decorated in pseudo-Chinese style. c. 1770. No mark. Height, 11.5 in. In the Author's collection

beautiful as well as quaint results were secured. None, I think, is more successful than the group on the famous maroon-ground Champion's Bristol plate in Mr. MacGregor Duncan's collection, shown in *APOLLO*, December, 1942, where the figure drawing is completely Oriental in



Fig. VIII. WORCESTER. Sucrier from the Bodenham Service, decorated with whimsical Chinese figures in reserves on a ground of early large blue scale. c. 1760. No mark. Diameter, 4 in. In the Author's collection



Fig. IX. BOW. Plate decorated in blue with the well-known Oriental *Jumping Boy* pattern, here rendered in a particularly amusing manner. c. 1750. No mark. Diameter, 8.1 in. Formerly in the Author's collection

centre of the *Bishop Sumner* dish in Fig. II, where vain search will be made for the head of the hostile bird. Perhaps the *kylin* has eaten it!

It was only to be expected that the representation of the human figure should have been undertaken by Europeans in their copying of Oriental designs and some

feeling. Nearly approaching it is the painting on the small chocolate pot of Cookworthy's manufacture in Fig. VI, from my own collection. Quite at the opposite pole are the odd-looking persons on my large Cookworthy coffee-pot in Fig. VII. They are certainly intended to represent Orientals but succeed only in looking "like



Fig. X. WORCESTER. Cup and saucer decorated in blue with a quaint and rare pattern of Oriental inspiration. c. 1755. Mark, blue crescent. Diameter, 4.8 in. In the Author's collection

nothing on earth." It is plain that the artist was painting under the influence of the Chinese style but modified by his European imagination.

There is no end to the variety of Chinese figures which were copied or to the surroundings in which they were represented; they lean out of windows, engage themselves in domestic pursuits, take tea, play music, read scrolls, stand in large jars, and so on, providing in themselves and their occupations enough amusement for a lifetime of collecting. Some of them seem quite aloof from every-day affairs, while others are engaged in the most homely and natural manner, such, for example, as the *Hob-in-the-Well* group, where an active youngster shies a rock at a large vase to release his drowning companion whose head is well above the rim of the vessel in the position in which one might expect to see a drowning person's feet; leaning over to get a better view of the proceedings, but otherwise quite inactive, is an adult who might well effect a rescue in half the time! But who thinks of probabilities in such a charming scene! Another figure which stands in a jar is a quaint little fellow with an enormous spear seen on one Worcester service alone, known as the Bodenham service, the *sucrier* of which is in my collection and is shown in Fig. VIII.

I know of only one exception to the Chinese or pseudo-Chinese nationality of these figure subjects and that is the Japanese lady who sits outside a pavilion with birds, birdcage, draperies, etc., on some Chelsea services of the raised-anchor period. Some of the attempts at repro-

ducing Oriental figure subjects are extremely quaint, few more so than the group on an early Bow teapot, formerly in my collection, where two anxious parents are regarding their offspring who appears to be suffering from a surfeit of green apples . . . doubled up, hands on "tummy," and mouth open.

It remains to mention the very considerable class of decoration, particularly in Bow, Worcester, Lowestoft and Liverpool, which was carried out in blue and is now known as *blue and white*. The designs, even to the powder-blue grounds, follow Oriental originals with particular care and attention and contrive to remain closer to the prototype than any of the forms of derived decoration which have been considered so far. The little *vignettes* of Chinese river-scenes are consistently faithful, and it is only in the figure-painting that signs of a European modification sometimes become apparent. One of the most amusing specimens in this class is shown in Fig. IX, where the impish devilment of the *Jumping Boy* and the blank amazement on the face of the *Lady* never fail to evoke a smile. I have had many examples of this pattern, both Oriental and English, but none so delightfully rendered as this.

Many of the blue-decorated pieces attain considerable complexity and are not always the most successful. Very little Chelsea seems to have been decorated with blue alone, but it is probable that a certain amount remains unrecognized at present. The Plymouth and Bristol factories under Cookworthy produced a considerable quantity, but by the time Champion took over control in 1773 the fashion was dying out and he made very little. The greater part of our blue-decorated specimens came from Bow, Worcester, Lowestoft and Liverpool. A Worcester design of particular quaintness and rarity is shown in Fig. X.

In searching for Oriental originals of our English decoration it will be found quite often that the two will occur together, as in cups and saucers where the one will be Chinese and the other perhaps Worcester or Bristol. In some of these the fidelity of the copy is remarkable. In other cases no exact counterpart will be discovered, and it may require two or three Oriental pieces to provide the decoration of a single English specimen.

(To be continued)

BYZANTINE GUIDE TO PAINTING

This was the only text book to which early artists had access. In it were set down the Christian Church's ideals to which artists were compelled to conform. For more than a thousand years from A.D. 300 nobody thought of departing from the old traditions regarding the necessary symbolism and conventional idea of colour, although technical methods varied considerably. The Guide gives minute directions both as to subject-matter and methods of execution. For instance, "On the Character and Physiognomy of the Mother of God," is the heading of a set of careful directions for producing an accurate likeness of the Virgin.

In the National Gallery is a painting called "The Holy Money-Despisers," signed "By the hand of Emmanuel, priest, son of John," who was living in Venice about 1660. This painting shows how servilely the Byzantine Guide was followed, for had the picture been painted a thousand years earlier it would have had much the same aspect. The Byzantine School has never changed or died out. The Mount Athos artists are still keeping the formula alive.

THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

BY HERBERT FURST

THOSE who listened recently to Brains Trust discussions will have had reason to note how very *shaky* our conceptions of art and beauty still are. The other day, for example, a questioner wanted the "Trust" to tell him whether Beauty is an objective reality or whether it is a purely subjective matter. The ensuing discussion was a display of the extraordinary confusion of mind which always shows up when we seek to define the meaning of words which cover the regions of concrete material and abstract thought. Some of the members of the "Trust" conceived beauty as something that exists independently, others believed that it existed only "in the eye of the beholder." That is to say: to some it seemed evident that the *beauty* of, say, a Sunset—not the physical conditions from which it springs—would remain even if there were none left to admire it, whilst to others it was equally evident that a work of art would only be a thing of beauty to those who thought it so.

The aforementioned *shakiness* of our conceptions is, I suggest, due to the fact that words often signify things in a world in which the physical and the metaphysical are difficult to distinguish, so that we sometimes use them without ourselves being quite sure of what we mean or how the hearer will interpret them.

The other day, for example, a friend of mine wrote to me: "It does seem strange that talent in painting belongs wholly to the past whilst in other walks of life the present generation is credited with exceptional skill." In the background of his mind evidently was the thought that "Talent in Painting"—i.e., *art*—is a matter of skill; so that he found it strange that whilst we had obviously *progressed* in such skilled professions as science and technology we could recognize no such progress in art. There is a confusion here due to the terms *art* and *skill*, which stand to one another somewhat as the word *heaven* stands in relation to the word *sky*. Originally art and skill signified identical activities, just as heaven and sky meant the same thing; but as the physical sky also meant in the metaphysical sense the heavens, so the physical activities requiring skill are involved in the metaphysical task of creating a work of art. Mankind finds a fundamental difficulty in distinguishing the figurative from the figured, the idea from its representation. Even in the days of Luther it seemed rational to throw an inkpot at the Devil as David flung a stone at Goliath.

Certainly it requires skill to create a work of art, and it requires science; but there is now a great difference between these two words which also once denoted the same thing. The present-day painter relies on science to a much greater extent than the old masters; but it is not *his own science*. He *buys* his tools and materials which technology provides for him ready-made, where the old master had to make both his tools and his materials. A good painter at one time meant, primarily, a good workman who knew how to make the best pictures out of the best materials. To-day a philosopher—Benedetto Croce—can say, "it is possible to be a great artist with a bad technique . . . an architect who makes use of unsuitable material . . . a painter who uses colours that

deteriorate rapidly. . . . But what is impossible is to be . . . a great painter who does not give tone to his colours . . . a great architect who does not harmonise his lines . . . in short a great artist who cannot express himself." Note the last word. It shows the use of a word which covers the physical and metaphysical. For what does *himself* stand for if not MAN with his physical body and his metaphysical mind. If the artist *expresses* himself, and, *pace* Croce, in order to do so he must have command over his physical means, he expresses *his* idea of beauty; and if it is *his idea* it is something he has somehow *seen* with his physical eye plus his metaphysical vision; for the shapes of things can only be perceived and conceived by the senses. An *all-seeing* eye, an eye fitted, say, with X-ray or ultra-red sight, with a telescopic and a microscopic focusing power would, in fact, see nothing remotely resembling the physical world as we see it, and thus his conceptions would correspond to none of our *ideas*.

It seems clear, therefore, that what we call beauty is in fact only what *we* call beauty; it is the result of our human limitations and can be perceived and conceived only by those subject to identical limitations of sight. But we are only numbers of individuals and there is—so far as we know—no one individual in all respects identical with any other, either in the physical or the metaphysical sense. Perception and conception of beauty must therefore vary with each individual.

The principles of art—and they are the principles of all the arts—balance, proportion, unity in rhythmic relation of part to part and of each part to the whole—are also the principles of Nature; and if Beauty is "that which being seen pleases" they are also the definition of beauty; for it is precisely the recognition of a rhythmic relation of parts to the whole which pleases, whether that whole be a kitchen table or a stabile world—or "the mysterious universe." The principle of Art is objective, *real* and eternal.

But that principle alone does not help *us* much in our perception of either art or beauty in so far as that depends on *vision*, for the order which the principle implies is not immediately visible.

The physical eye in the objective sense of a photographic lens is—unlike that of the camera—governed by our faculty of focusing; and that faculty is subject not only to physical impacts but also to our will which is consciously—or subconsciously—directed by our mind. We can, if we will, not only see the *wood*, we can also, by focusing, see the tree, the leaf, the veins of the leaf; we can ignore the whole wood as an aggregation of trees and see it as colour or as mass. We can see the tree as a particular kind of tree or as timber; we can see it as an Ash or as Yggdrasil; or the Tree of Knowledge. We can see it *as if* it were a real tree—even when it is only a painted one; even when it is a painting we can see it as Titian, Claude, Turner, Constable, Corot, Cézanne—or, if you like, Mr. Graham Sutherland or Mr. Badmin sees it.

The point here is that, so far as we know, the object remains the same—for there is no evidence that trees,

THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

for instance, have changed their nature or appearance for a million years—but its *beauty* and the art with which its beauty may be evoked or re-presented depends absolutely on the *eye of the beholder*. That eye, however, is capable of sight mental as well as of sight physical; it is the same instrument which, looking heavenwards, beholds only the sky, or looking skywards beholds the heavens. The poets have played with this duality of vision: Shakespeare with his cloud-gazing Polonius dwells on physical, Wordsworth with his *Primrose*, Blake with his *Thistle*, on metaphysical associations.

If the perception of such differences is possible to those who contemplate Nature, it is equally possible in looking at art; but with this significant difference. In regarding Nature we ourselves extract from it what appeals to us; in regarding a work of art the artist has already extracted what appealed to him. He offers us food prepared and cooked, and spiced by him. We make in our language (and, so far as I know, in that alone), a difference between Ox and beef; Calf and veal; Pig and pork; but no one in his senses would complain because beef did not *resemble* an ox, or a pig didn't *look* like pork. That awareness of this difference between "art" and "nature" is still not well developed, and there are still people to whom this difference is quite immaterial. However much warned against idolatry, there is still the devout Catholic to whom the image of the saint is the saint himself; who believes that not *the* Madonna but *a* particular Madonna will actually listen to his prayer. Children and primitive peoples hardly distinguish between the painted and the actual world; a circle with two dots and two dashes does to them not *represent* a face, it *is* a face.

The problem with this confusion, however, goes much deeper. After all, the difference between "Ox" and "beef" is not categorical, neither is the theoretical distinction made between art and nature valid in practice. To give an example. Hardiman, the Sculptor, created, not long ago, a monument of Lord Haig, by *imitating* in bronze his face, figure and clothes; but he sat him as a Commander-in-Chief on the bronze image of a symbolical horse, freely designed to represent a charger. That got him into serious trouble: the public did not resent the figure of the man, but it did disapprove of his horse—in other words, it did not like *art*.* The Russians by-passed the whole problem when they scientifically preserved Lenin's body, clothes and all, and established it as a monument to the founder of modern Russia—an expedient which should commend itself to Hardiman's critics—for that is the gist of their conception of *art* and of beauty—if they only knew it.

Nor is such a conception of art quite so wide of the mark as it might seem. The ancient Egyptians, using all their science and all their art, started the Kremlin's practice, only they preserved the body so that the soul might continue to have its habitation; and they added to the embalmed body images in wood of the master's servants not as works of art but in order that his servants might continue to serve him. In fact, the origin of art—of all *playing*—is not in the attempt "to hold a mirror up to nature," but, on the contrary, to perpetuate an act and its actors. The art was in the impersonation of the

person and re-enactment of his deeds, which was thought necessary for the continuance and welfare of the community.

The talking technicolour film would have made all the art of drama, the art of dance, the art of music, the arts of sculpture and painting—in short, all literature and the cult of beauty superfluous and therefore impossible—if the impossible had happened and *science*—objective knowledge—had preceded *Art*. Primitive man, were he conceivable as a scientist, would have *put on* the film of the rites and rituals in their appropriate seasons and so have saved himself the trouble of conserving and re-enacting what he believed to be necessary for his continued welfare. It would have satisfied all those metaphysical or spiritual requirements which *science* cannot satisfy.

The artist, always admired in his dual capacity as a maker of physical things with metaphysical values, is the creator of beauty which in part springs from calculated skill and in part from incalculable intuitions.

The *eye for beauty*, which the beholder needs quite as much as the author of works of art, is subject to the conditions of its environment both mental and physical. It has a different *focus* for example, north and south of the Alps, a difference which made "Flemish" art differ from "Italian" art, differ both in design and technique, as well as in mental conception. So also the East has not the *focus* of the West. Again, Christianity is a matter of supposedly *catholic*—i.e., world-wide faith—but the early Christians had the focus of the contemporary pagan artists; the Italian Christians of the Renaissance sought the focus of a Pheidias or a Praxiteles; the South American Christian of the counter reformation had the focus of the "Jesuit style." In the XIXth century the "Gothic" style became not only *proper* to religious expression but also for profane purposes. When Sir Joseph Paxton built that epoch-marking novelty of glass and iron, the Crystal Palace, he gave its architectural features "Gothic" details; though perhaps that was not such an architectural *malapropism* as it seems: a Gothic architect would have understood "all windows and no walls" better than a Greek one.

One must find the right focus before one can realize the order.

What, then, is the upshot of all these somewhat desultory musings; we may sum them up this wise.

The perception of beauty depends primarily on the senses and can therefore exist as a *reality* only for those who possess human limitations. Principles of beauty being those of order alone, are *real* in the absolute sense.

The perception of beauty depends on physical and mental vision and is subject to the power of physical and mental focusing.

Art visual is the skill—both material and mental—of presenting an idea with beauty *through* the eye *to* the mind.

What the idea is depends on time, place, the physical and mental environment of the individual. If, as my friend maintained, "talent belongs wholly to the past," it only seems so because in looking back we "see the idea" not only more clearly but with greater detachment; because in its true sense a work of the past has ceased to function in the way it was intended. We make allowances for time and place. I do not know whether Shaw

(Continued on page 21)

* I think the artist made a mistake by not stylizing the figure also, but probably the public would have resented such a stylization still more.

CHINESE ART (FIFTH ARTICLE) BRONZES—Part II

BY VICTOR RIENAECKER

GILDED bronze is a favourite traditional material for the images of Sakyamuni, the historical Buddha, which were modelled in square-spaced lines after pictures drawn from measurements recorded in the canon. The principal representations were:

1. *His birth.* An infant standing erect upon a lotus-thalamus, pointing upward to heaven with his right hand, downward to earth with his left, according to the tradition which tells us that he cried out at the moment, "I the only, most exalted one!"
2. *Sakya returning from the Mountains.* Of ascetic aspect, with beard and shaven poll, attired in flowing garments, and holding his hands in a position of prayer. The ear lobes are enlarged, a sign of wisdom, and the brow bears the *urna*, the luminous mark that distinguishes a Buddha, or a Bodhisattva.
3. *The All-wise Sakya.* A Buddha seated cross-legged upon a lotus throne resting the left hand upon the knee, the right hand raised in the mystic preaching pose. The hair is generally represented as a blue mass, composed of short close curls, with a jewel placed midway between the crown and forehead.
4. *The Nirvana.* A recumbent figure lying upon a raised bench, with the head pillowed upon a lotus.
5. *In the Sakyamuni Trinity.* Either erect, or seated, in the attitude of meditation, with the alms bowl in his hands, between his spiritual sons, the Bodhisattvas, Manjusri and Samantabhadra; the three forming a mystic triad.

The eighteen Arhats, or Lohans, a group of the early apostles or missionaries of the faith, were also often moulded in bronze, each one posed in a fixed attitude with his distinctive symbol or badge, in the same way as the Christian apostles have been represented, i.e., Mark with a lion, Luke with a calf, etc.

The Chinese made much use of gilded bronze. While it is the traditional material of Buddhist images, there is reason to believe that the art of gilding was known some time before the introduction of Buddhism.

The usual process of gilding was to soak the object in a decoction of herbs and acid fruits to which saltpetre had been added to clean the surface; then the metal was beaten and rubbed with mercury, and the gold applied in the form of leaf on the surface thus amalgamated. The mercury was finally volatilized by fire, and the work finished by burnishing the gold that remained adherent.

P'an Tsu-yin, in his *P'an Ku Lou I Ch'i K'uan Chih*—"Inscriptions on vessels in the Collection of P'an Ku Lou"—refers to "the seven great perils" which have been encountered by bronze vessels since the end of the Chou dynasty. The first was when Shih Huang Ti, the founder of the Ts'in dynasty, attempted to destroy all bronzes and military utensils with inscriptions, at the time of his burning of the books. His object seems to have been to efface every form of record of an earlier age and thus commence a new era with his reign. After melting down all bronze objects, he had them cast into twelve statues. The second was when Tung Cho (died A.D. 192), in his attempts to bolster up the waning fortunes of the Han dynasty, melted down the bronze statues which he found in the two capitals, Lo-yang (Ho-nan fu) and Ch'ang-an (Hei-an fu), and also many other bronzes, turning them into coins. The third occurred in A.D. 590, during the reign of the Emperor Wen Ti, of the Sui dynasty, when three great bells and a large number of vessels of the Ts'in and Han dynasties captured from the Kingdom of Ch'en were reduced. The fourth was in A.D. 955, during the reign of the Emperor Shih Tsung, of the later Chou dynasty, when there was issued an Imperial decree allowing a limit of fifty days within which all bronze figures, vessels, and other articles from the two capitals and from every outlying district had to be presented to local officials for destruction. The only exceptions were the ceremonial articles belonging to the court and articles for military or official purposes, mirrors, and bells used in temples. The fifth was in A.D. 1158, when the Emperor Ch'eng Lung, of the Chin Dynasty, ordered the destruction of all ancient vessels captured during the expeditions against the Liao



SACRIFICIAL VESSEL in the shape of an Owl
Eumorfopoulos Collection (British Museum)

and Sung dynasties. The sixth was during the reign of Kao Tsung (A.D. 1131-1163), of the Southern Sung dynasty, when bronze vessels in the possession of the people were collected and added to fifteen hundred vessels from the Imperial palace. All were handed over to the Keeper of the Mint and are said to have made more than two million catties, or three million pounds. The seventh was at the close of the Northern Sung dynasty, when all bronze objects were removed from the palaces and temples at Pien-lo (K'ai-feng fu) to the capital of the Chin dynasty.

Ancient bronzes were of a great variety of shapes. The "Mirror of Antiquities of the Imperial Studio"—*Hsi Ch'ing Ku Chien*—gives 71 shapes. In addition to vessels, this list includes bells, drums, daggers, crossbows, chariot ornaments, surveying instruments, staff-heads, spoons, mirrors and other small articles. The number of the most important shapes of bronze vessels is interesting. There are 233 *ting*. The *ting* is a tripod or caldron, usually with three feet and two ears, though occasionally vessels with four feet were also included in this class. It was intended to hold food offered in sacrificial ceremonies. The name, however, is also used in a generic sense and is associated with *chung*, bells, as for example in the phrase *chung ting*, which means simply ancient bronze vessels. Of vases—*p'ing* and *hu*—there are 173, and these were used as wine receptacles. Wine-jars, *tsun*, number 148. Goblets, *ku*, include 116 specimens, and cups, *chih*, 42. There are 95 *yu*, or wine-jars with handles, 17 *lei* or wine-jars, 67 *i*, 49 *tun*, and 31 *yi*, all of which are wine receptacles of different shapes. There are also 17 *p'an*, or platters, and 40 *lavers*, *hsi*, for sacrificial ablutions. In addition, there are mentioned 46 bells, *chung*, 14 drums, *ku*, and 93 mirrors, *chien*.

CHINESE BRONZES

There is a decisiveness and a precision in the best bronze vessels which exhibit the truest understanding by the craftsman of his material. He fully appreciated that the demands of metal are different from those of wood or stone.

Decoration varied according to period. The earliest vessels had little ornamentation; but, later, the geometric and the animal motives were developed. With the rectangular scrolls on the borders and in panels of the *lei wên*, "thunder pattern," and *yun wên*, "cloud pattern," were sometimes intermixed stylized animal forms, such as *k'uei wên*, or the "pinniped pattern"; *p'an k'uei wên*, or "coiled pinniped pattern"; and *ch'an wên*, or "cicada pattern." These motives are generally in pairs on opposite sides of a central design in relief consisting of an ox-head or, sometimes, of a circle of geometric form. Often in the scrolls are found the fearsome ogre head—*t'ao-t'ieh*. The *t'ao-t'ieh* assumed a variety of forms, of which the principal feature was the large protruding eyes. Tiger heads, elephant heads, and goat heads also were used as decorative features. The owl had evidently a special significance in the religious conceptions of the Chinese, and was often introduced into the tomb with the dead. Presumably this was due to their ability to see in the dark, their wakefulness and fear of light.

T'ao means avarice, and *t'ieh* gluttony. In combination the characters refer to a monster that is reputed to have devoured human beings. Ferguson is not convinced that this head generally described as that of an ogre, or *t'ao t'ieh*, was intended as a warning against gluttony. He suggests that it might represent the horns and large bulging eyes of the terror-stricken animal as it is led to the slaughter. "There seems," he argues, "no good reason for introducing at the time of sacrifices to ancestors, to heaven or to earth, a warning against gluttony in the decoration of ritual objects, but every reason to call this head *hei shou*, i.e., the head of a sacrificial animal, rather than to use the term *t'ao t'ieh* which has been current since the time of the Sung dynasty. This head of a victim for sacrifice is also used as a design for the knobs on the top of covers, where it is usually found in a group of three, from which fact such covers, are described as *san hsi*, i.e., with the heads of three sacrificial animals."¹

Oswald Siren suggests that the *t'ao t'ieh* is possibly of foreign origin, "as also the motive itself may be, although it developed into something thoroughly Chinese and acquired a more general symbolic meaning after it became a standing motive on the sacrificial vessels." The explanation that it is a warning against greed and intemperance or that it represents the God of Storm or Thunder, though often combined with *lei wên* (thunder clouds conventionalized in meander shape), show traces of being later interpretations.² More interesting is Hirth's and von Rosthorn's observation that *t'ao t'ieh* was the name of the four wild men who were driven out by the Emperor Shun into the mountains beyond the frontiers, as also the name of a wild tribe on the south-west frontier, where men were reported to have hairy bodies and pigs' snouts.³ In any case it would appear that the name came to be used for wild, untamed creatures of a half-animal, half-human nature. It is certain that these *t'ao t'ieh* heads, whether reminiscent of tigers, wild goats, or of more human monsters, must have been regarded as awe-inspiring, just like the ancient gorgon masks. But the Chinese *t'ao t'ieh* bears no resemblance to the classical gorgon; it recalls the so-called Indian and Javanese Kirtimukha masks. Kirtimukha was originally a kind of terrifying emanation of Shiva, doomed by the god to devour its own limbs. It was used later mainly as a decorative device on Shivaite temples. No archaic Kirtimukha masks are known in Indian art, and those of the Middle Ages, which are very common indeed, have a rather baroque character, which makes them akin to later Chinese *t'ao t'ieh*, as, for instance, those of the T'ang period.⁴ More surprising are the resemblances between the Chinese *t'ao t'ieh* masks and certain representations of animal-like or demonic human heads in Mexican and Central American monuments. Such motives are indeed very common both in larger stelæ and in articles of pottery and mosaics from Guatemala (Guirigua), Honduras and southern Mexico, of which some are attributed to Maya art and others to the art of the Zapotecs and Aztecs. It is, of course, conceivable



BRONZE BELL
Art Institute, Chicago



BRONZE BELL
Sumitomo Collection, Japan

that certain motives penetrated from the North to Mexico and that there were communications between Asia and America at a very early age.

Diapers sometimes occur with a kind of nipple in the centre. This is the only instance in ancient Chinese art of a motive that may have been drawn from the human body; though it is by no means certain that the Sung scholars were correct in interpreting this round, bulging shape as intended to represent the breast nipple. If it were, it would be natural to assume a fertility association; but this can scarcely be the case when no other stylized member of the human body, male or female, can be recognized. Nipples or plugs also occur in the centre of lozenge shapes. They belonged originally to bells on which they were probably used for adjusting the tone. It appears as if they could be removed or inserted at the pleasure of the player of the bell; but actually they were always cast solid with the body of the bell, which was then accurately tuned by carefully filing the plugs. This plug decoration became freely used on many other types of ritual objects. Bells were suspended in front of the banquet hall, and sounded to summon the guests, either alone or in accompaniment with other musical instruments. In the ancestral temple they called the spirits to the funeral meats prepared for the ghostly repast. They were clapperless and had to be struck outside near the lower rim with a mallet.

Many of the geometric forms found on bronzes are said to have symbolic meanings, but it is difficult to decide whether the symbolism is an interpretation of the forms or the forms an outgrowth of existing conceptions.

The characters of the inscriptions may be divided into three classes. There are the early ideographs in the style of hieroglyphics, such as are found on vessels of the Shang dynasty (1766-1122 B.C.). Along with this class there developed the fine spiral writing which is found on the early bone relics. The second class of writing is that of the Chou dynasty, when the ideographs began to lose their pictorial character and assumed a square and more regular form. The number of ideographs was also greatly increased, to keep pace with the growing complexity of daily life. Social intercourse required an enlarged vocabulary. Many of the inscriptions of this period show beautiful forms which are still written in practically the same way but without some of the flourishes. The Chou style of writing is reputed to have been systematized by Shih Chou into the manner of the great seal characters—*ta chuan*. This style is the counterpart of the illuminated European texts of the Middle Ages. The third style is that of the later Han dynasty, when the number of ideographs was increased to such an extent as to make the writing of books possible. This writing has been in continuous use, with certain modifications and additions, down to the present time. The cast and incised inscriptions found on bronzes may



SET OF VESSELS FOR SACRIFICES from Pao Chi Hsien
Metropolitan Museum, New York

be the record of some noble action or of a memorable historical fact; or, again, they may be a dedication by a son to his father; or the glorification of the donor's own good deeds. Some are expressions of penitence or resolutions for a better life. While these inscriptions sometimes may confirm some historical statement or shed new light upon otherwise obscure literary passages, generally the ideographs are so terse that it is not easy to interpret their meaning; if, indeed, one can be sure of their correct identification.

It might have been expected that the diligent scholars of the Han dynasty would have left behind them important records of the production and use of bronze vessels in their own period as well as in the San Tai from which they were separated only by a few decades; but, up to the present, nothing has been discovered. All their efforts were directed toward an understanding and explanation of the six modes, *lin shu*, of development of the written language. In this work they riveted their attention upon the form of the ideographs found in the inscriptions on bronze vessels, seeking to determine their proper classification as pictographs, *hsiang hsing*; as indicators, *chih shih*; as combiners, *hui i*; as divergers, *chuan chu*; as derivators, *chia chieh*; or as phonograms, *hsing sheng*. Their labours finally came to completion in the Shuo Wen Chieh Tzu of Hsü Shên; but they seem to have overlooked entirely the artistic qualities of ancient bronzes in their zeal for linguistic studies. This philological tendency continued through the epochs of the Three Kingdoms and of the division between the North and South. It seems that the primary wish of the scholars of these periods was only the development of a usable written language for their country, even at the expense of neglecting the appreciation of its art. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that all their artistic instincts and efforts were made to converge in writing or calligraphy.

The literary records reveal that vessels made in the Chou dynasty of the finest quality of bronze were gilded. The metal was beaten into leaf and laid over the surface of the vessel, which was then gradually heated until the gold and bronze formed an amalgam. This process of gilding was later used during the period of the small contending states (A.D. 221-618) for a purpose directly opposite to the earlier one, viz., that of concealing defects in the casting.

Some modern writers have divided bronzes into two general classes, musical (*yo ch'i*) and ritual (*li ch'i*). This classification is based upon their position in the ceremonies. The musical instruments were placed at the sides of the altar and at some distance from it, but the ritual vessels were either on it or immediately at hand. All the same the bronzes used for music were an essential part of the ritual ceremonies and had no separate purpose.

Among musical instruments, the *chung* are the most numerous. The name was first used about the end of the Western Chou period and later alternatively with *po*. *Ch'un* is a curious object of the Han dynasty which, according to Wang Kuo-wei, is an instrument from which sound was produced by letting water fall

in drops over its top on the straw placed underneath. To is a bell with a clapper; *nao* and *cheng* are respectively smaller and larger flat bells attached to wooden handles for holding in the hand when struck with a hammer. *Ling* form a large varied class, including harness-bells, chariot bells and wind-bells for suspension in places where they are subject to currents of air. *Ku* are drums; *wu ch'i* are musical instruments of percussion in the form of a battle-axe, and are called dancing axes.

It is generally supposed that in the casting of all types of bronzes the *cire perdue*, or waste wax, process was adopted. In this method the craftsman modelled some clay to the shape of the inside surfaces and then overlaid the lump with thick wax, which in turn was modelled to the intended finished outside surfaces. Upon this he worked another clay wall as close as possible to every cranny and curve. Then through holes or vents leading to the wax, he poured the molten bronze which melted and displaced the wax through lower vents. The metal then cooled in all the delicate contours, and when quite hard, the surrounding clay was broken away and the inner clay core scooped out, revealing the bronze vessel complete. The craftsman then worked on the vessel direct, clarifying details, rubbing off lumps, emphasizing outlines, and, where necessary, filling in holes. The surfaces of some bronzes were subsequently enriched with fire-gilt.

But this *cire perdue* method could not have been the only one used for bronze casting; for clay moulds have been discovered at An-yang which indicate that some of the larger bronzes were cast direct. These moulds were not found in the Royal Tombs themselves, but on the sites of contemporary habitations. As a result of the finding of these An-yang moulds we must revise our views and admit that many of the larger bronzes may have been cast direct. Some bronzes are inlaid with turquoise, which is another surprise; for an eminent archaeologist has maintained that turquoise was unknown in China until about the Christian era. But the bronzes with turquoise inlay found at An-yang must be datable to the second millennium B.C.

The proportions of copper and tin alloy used in the making of bronze objects have been carefully recorded in the sixth chapter, called *K'ao Kung Chi*, of the "Ritual of Chou" (*Chou Li*). This chapter is not part of the original work, but, though there has been much speculation whether it was added during the Han or the Ch'i dynasty (A.D. 479-501), its information is undoubtedly reliable. Bells, tripods, vases and measures contained one-sixth alloy; axes and hatchets, one-fifth; lances and spears, one-fourth; two-edged swords and agricultural implements, one-third; and mirrors one-half. These proportions were those fixed for the Imperial workshops; and we know from tests upon actual examples that there were many variations from them. Good workmen in the earliest periods sought to give a silvery, iridescent colour resembling mercury to their best pieces.⁴

The patination of ancient bronzes differs according to the way in which they have been preserved. Those from the tombs of early emperors or kings, which were solidly built and in which

CHINESE ART: BRONZES

the bronzes were placed on stone pedestals, did not generally come into contact with surrounding earth or water. The effect of the dank air caused such bronzes to take on bluish tints, which is accounted the most beautiful colour. Vessels that have been long buried in dry or wet soil gain a patina varying, of course, according to the chemical elements surrounding them. The malachite green shades of such specimens are very lovely and are said to resemble the rind of a melon, *kua-p'i lü*. Sometimes several colours are found on one vessel. Such are called five-coloured, *wu sêh*. The thickness of the patina is the result of surrounding conditions, and varies from sub-surface changes of colour to thick scales. Genuine patina is, of course, a new chemical composition, and can rarely be separated from the original metal, except when it has been gilded or lacquered.

Green, varying from a bright apple-green to the heavy dull shades, is by far the most common patination to be found on bronzes. This chemical change is the result of the combined action of dampness and the acidity of the soil. Encrustations of malachite (a green copper carbonate) and atacamite (an apple-green colour containing chlorine) provide some beautiful patinas. Azurite, a blue basic carbonate of copper, furnishes a rather rare touch of vivid colour to the dull ground of the metal. The various shades of red and brown are usually furnished by compounds of iron carried in solution and deposited by the action of water during periods of flood or excessive rains during the wet summer season.

Although several attempts have been made to date bronzes accurately by analysing their patinas, considering the varying climatic conditions and other unknown factors involved over long periods, it is extremely doubtful whether reliable dating can be reached by this method alone.

Modern "patination," caused by the action of various chemicals, i.e., by deliberate re-burial in the ground for a few years, by boiling in specially prepared oils, by baking in ovens with dyeing compounds, by painting, lacquering, or waxing the surface with powdered preparations, is not as a rule difficult to distinguish from genuine patination. Boiling a doubtful specimen, or soaking it in water from three to four days, following this by a brisk rubbing with a stiff brush, will generally remove the artificial patina without harming the surface of the bronze.



FOUR-HANDLED BRONZE with green patina. Chou Dynasty
Eumorfopoulos Collection (British Museum)

The influence of her ancient bronzes upon all other forms of Chinese art works has been profound. Bronze types of decoration and their shapes have been reproduced in innumerable jade carvings and in ceramics throughout the centuries. The forms of early pottery were congruous to those of bronzes, and in some instances must have predated them. Jade, ivory, amber and precious stone carvings and porcelains all bear trace of the influence of this earliest form of artistic expression. In fact, it is not too much to say that bronzes are the main foundation of Chinese art. Bronze inscriptions became the chief source from which Li Ssu in the third century B.C., prepared a unified system of writing based upon the principle of using characters not only for the expression of ideas but also for their formal effect. The art of writing, i.e., calligraphy, thus had its origin in the inscriptions on bronzes.

¹ John C. Ferguson, "Survey of Chinese Art" (Chapter I, Bronzes), p. 9.

² Cf. W. Perceval Yetts, "Chinese Bronzes," London, 1925, p. 13.

³ F. Hirth, "The Ancient History of China."

⁴ Cf. O. C. Gangoly, "A Note on Kirtimukha"; Rupam, No. 1, 1920.

⁵ There is an example of this kind in the Metropolitan Museum, New York. It is a covered tripod decorated with pinniped pattern and unquestionably of the Shang dynasty. It formerly belonged to the noted scholar and collector Shan Po-het.

THE BRITISH ANTIQUE DEALERS' ASSOCIATION MEETING

The twenty-sixth annual general meeting of the British Antique Dealers' Association was held at the offices of the association on May 24. There was a good attendance, which was presided over by the retiring president, Mr. S. W. Wolsey, who has occupied the chair for two years. The following members were elected to the Executive for the next twelve months: President, Mr. John J. Hodges, a director of the Goldsmiths and Silversmiths Company, Ltd., Vice-Presidents, Mr. Charles G. Biggs, a director of Messrs. Bruford and Son, Ltd., Exeter, Mr. Alfred Bullard of North Row, Park Lane, W.1, and Mr. Malcolm Webster of Queen Street, Mayfair; Mr. W. Drummond Popley, of the Sussex Goldsmiths and Silversmiths Company of Brighton, was re-elected Treasurer. The following new members were elected to the Council: London: O. Bateman Brown of Lenygton and Morant; Philip Blairman; S. Kaye, of Lewis and Kaye; Ronald Frederick Lock; David Manheim; and Henry Alfred

Sutch; Country: Leslie Godden, of Salisbury; H. W. Keil, of Broadway, Worcestershire; and Sydney Leorard Moss, of Ringwood.

BOOK REVIEW

HERBERT READ: AN INTRODUCTION TO HIS WORK BY VARIOUS HANDS. (Faber, 10s. 6d.)

The failure of this book is not Mr. Read's. As poet, psychologist, philosopher, literary critic, and theorist on the arts, his own writings are always interesting; though they often flicker so rapidly from the jargon of one phase of art or science to another that connected synthesis is impossible at the present stage. But for that very reason it was rash to suppose that anyone could write intelligibly about Mr. Read. First-hand acquaintance with him is necessary and is worth seeking, but it is scarcely encouraged by these rather self-centred and verbose essays by admirers. Perhaps the failure is partly due to the obscure thoughts and expressions of those contributions which have had to be translated. Mr. Read may be better trusted to write up his own spiritual pilgrimage some day, and the present volume will then, fortunately, no longer be required.

HINTS ON COLLECTING ANTIQUE FURNITURE—Part II

BY LT.-COL. SIDNEY G. GOLDSCHMIDT

I HAVE only too often witnessed the somewhat inept beginnings of a collector of antique furniture. I well remember when I was myself a tyro how gladly I would have welcomed an expert to guide me, but collectors were few, and real experts, as we understand the word to-day, non-existent. As for myself I had perhaps a better chance than most beginners of becoming a connoisseur. There were not so many amusements and distractions for the young (I was born in '69), and nearly every boy had a workshop with a fair collection of carpenter's tools and generally a treadle lathe. My father having a wholesome contempt for "dabbling," made me take lessons from the village carpenter, with the result that I acquired a fair knowledge of the principles of wood construction. Dove-tails, mortise and tenon, mitres, veneers, etc., were no longer mere words to me, and later, when I came to be a collector, I was able to add to whatever I had of artistic perception, a knowledge of fine craftsmanship. The village joiner, as well as plying his trade, dealt in old cottage and farmhouse furniture, and it was from him that my parents allowed me to buy my first specimen at the age of 14. A chest of drawers was wanted to store my winter and summer clothes, and it fulfils this purpose to-day because I have never found one of the size that I like better. (Illustrated in Part I, March, 1944.)

But in those days old furniture was little understood (I speak of about 60 years ago). Then every piece that was bought had to go through a revolting process of so-called improvement, the old patina and polish were removed, and if there had been fading the colour had to be "revived," that is, stained to what was fondly believed to be its original red colour, and polished to a glass-like finish with french polish. It was also a matter of good fortune if the piece escaped a few satinwood inlaid lines and inlaid fans and shells, without which addition mahogany furniture was unsaleable. I remember discussing this point with a well-known dealer now dead, and he owned that he had thus "spoiled more fine mahogany furniture than any man in London." But collectors learned better, and at the next phase, dealers got busy buying back these "improved" pieces and experimenting with various methods of dulling down the french polish in the vain attempt to recover the patinated

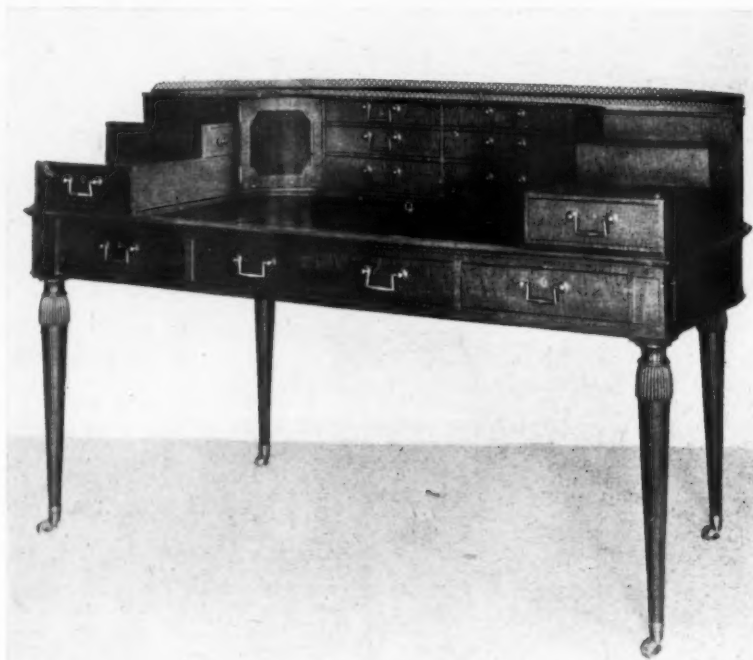


Fig. I. A CARLTON TABLE of exquisite workmanship, of fiddle-back mahogany with linings of oak

surface which had by then become one of the most sought-after qualities. I certainly was one of the first collectors to insist on untouched condition, but it only gradually became universally understood.

Once a local dealer called at my office and asked me to visit his shop and inspect his stock. As usual, all his mahogany had been scraped, french polished and inlaid; his oak elaborately carved, some pieces with dates and initials, and clock heads with "tempus fugit," so I had to tell him that only untouched pieces interested me and if he would let me know whenever he had such a piece I would call and see it. Some few weeks later I had word from him that he had a mahogany bureau book-case, absolutely untouched. It turned out to be a real beauty, cabinet making as near perfection as anything I have ever seen, "plum pudding" mahogany, size, design and proportions most desirable, while the colour and patina showed that it had probably stood undisturbed in some great house for which it had been originally made. I was lost in silent admiration, wondering how much I should be asked to pay for it, when, misunderstanding my silence, as well as evidently misunderstanding my motive, in wanting to see my purchase in untouched condition, he produced a four-inch scraper and before I could stop him, drew it across the full length of the sloping fall,

HINTS ON COLLECTING ANTIQUE FURNITURE

saying, "It will come up beautifully when it's repolished." Of course it was of no further interest and I doubt if a fine piece had ever been ruined in so short a time. It turned out later that he thought that I wished to see untouched pieces so that I could be sure they were genuine.

Well, as I said, dealers and collectors know better now, and "mint condition" is the most desirable quality.

When judging a piece, the first point to decide is whether it is really what you want. This advice is not as superfluous as it may sound, because one comes across tempting, desirable specimens at nearly every visit to a well-stocked antique dealer's shop, but such pieces do not necessarily fit your collection. In this connection there are many points for consideration, such as wood, date, height, width, depth, and last but by no means least, the type of house for which it was originally made.

The joys of being a collector are many, and mere possession is only one of them. For the amateur there is associated with most of his pieces some anecdote, coincidence or even adventure. How seldom one just walks into a shop, inquires a price, and buys. There is so often a piece to be traded in exchange, or the dealer has to be cajoled into lowering the price to meet a slender purse. There is a coincidence connected with the Carlton table I have chosen as one of the illustrations of this article.

Some years ago, after I had sold it, I got one morning a letter from the Curator of the Pennsylvania Museum, just as I was starting on a horse-hunting expedition to Quarndon and Market Harborough. It seems the table had been traced to me and the authorities wished to know its history. All I knew was that I had bought it by auction at Christie's and that it had been catalogued as one of the "Bretby heirlooms." I had no idea who or where Bretby was, nor did either of my hosts. But on the way home, we slowed down at a signpost which said "To Burton." My daughter, who was driving, thought it was an alternative way home, so we took it, and just outside the town of Burton we saw another sign at a large mansion reading "Bretby Hall Convalescent Hospital." Inquiry elicited that it had been the seat of the Earl of Chesterfield, and I was able to write to the Curator that "we hoped that it was at this desk that the second Earl had written the celebrated letters to his son."

It is a piece of exquisite workmanship. I have seen many Carlton House tables, but none to touch it. It is all fiddle-back mahogany with linings of oak less than one-eighth of an inch thick. It was unblemished and the only restoration was one of the brass drop handles. The drawers "sigh" as they are pushed in, and they are almost completely air-tight. They are interchangeable, and slide just as freely if they are inserted upside down. When the drawers are shut they fit so closely that they could be mistaken for dummies.

The other piece I have chosen for illustration (Fig. II) is a Sheraton secretaire book-case. The cupboard doors fit so well as to be dust-proof, and the pillars revolve on spindles to form the hinges. The eagle, the urns, and the ornaments on the frieze are carved in oak and ebonized. As can be seen, the grain of the mahogany fronts and the inlay is of the highest quality. The fittings of the interior of the *escritoire*, like those of the Carlton table, are fronted with fiddle-back mahogany, lined with oak with concealed dove-tails.



Fig. II. SHERATON SECRETAIRE BOOK-CASE. The pillars to the cupboard doors revolve on spindles to form the hinges

I chose these two examples illustrated for the various reasons enumerated in the seven points of excellence mentioned in my last article, but above all because of their typical English character. There is an absence of the foreign feeling traceable in the French and Italian influence in Stuart furniture, and to the Dutch feeling in furniture of the William and Mary and Queen Anne periods, which even the later improved English cabinet-making failed to overshadow.

The Carlton table is also illustrated in Sheraton's book, and became one of Gillow's Lancaster designs. Judging by the costings in their books, the "prime cost" to the firm (in 1796) was £17 8s. 8d. The piece ultimately fetched £1,000.

(To be continued)

Private Collectors may come across the specimen they are seeking with the help of a small advertisement in the Collectors' Quests column. The price is 30/- for three insertions in successive issues of about four or five lines. Single insertions are 12/6 each, but three or more are advised. Particulars of the specimen required should be sent to the Advertising Manager, 34 Glebe Road, Barnes, London, S.W.13. Telephone: Prospect 2044.

FRENCH FURNITURE IN THE COLLECTION OF MR. EVELYN PIXLEY (Continued)

BY M. JOURDAIN

THERE are further examples in the collection of Mr. Evelyn Pixley that exhibit the lively design in inlay of the second half of the XVIIIth century. The *escritoire* (Fig. I) (*secretaire à abattant*) with a falling flap was more frequently met with in France than in England at this period. The inlay on the sides and two doors of the lower stage takes the form of large bunches of flowers and foliage, while the falling flap is decorated with a central trophy of a violin and other musical instruments, grouped with music books beneath a swag of flowers and foliage. The interior of the upper stage is fitted with four small drawers and two shelves, and a writing slide covered with green leather; while the lower stage is shelved, the frieze is inlaid with a rosetted guilloche, and the piece is surmounted by a grey marble slab. There are small escutcheons and angle mounts. It bears the stamp of François Rubestuck (1722-1785), one of the many foreign craftsmen drawn to Paris during the *grand siècle*, who attained the *maîtrise* in 1766. Salverte,¹ who speaks of him as a skilled and careful craftsman, observes that several pieces bearing this maker's stamp give evidence of his alien (Westphalian) origin, but there is no hint of foreign handling or design in this piece.



Fig. I. LOUIS XVI MARQUETRY ESCRITOIRE by FRANÇOIS RUBESTUCK (1722-1785)



Fig. II. LOUIS XVI CLOCK and CANDELABRA. Movement of Clock by F. BERTHOND (1727-1807)

The clock and its flanking pair of vase-candelabra mounted in ormolu make up the classical *garniture de cheminée*. The case of the clock, which is of crystal, is mounted with delicate ormolu volutes finishing in a cock's head, a motif used on the doors and espagnolettes of Marie Antoinette's boudoir at Fontainebleau.² The two volutes and their ribbon form a disguised cypher of Marie Antoinette. A disguised cypher, formed of garlands of flowers,

FRENCH FURNITURE

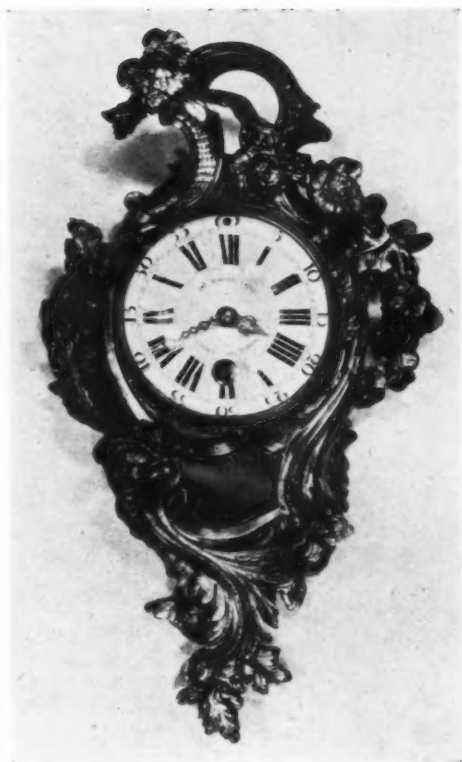


Fig. III. A CARTEL CLOCK. Movement by DAVID ROBERT L'AINE (1717-1769)



Fig. IV. LOUIS XV COMMUNE veneered with Rosewood and Tulip Wood and inlaid, by GODEFROY DESTER, admitted to the Maîtrise (1774)

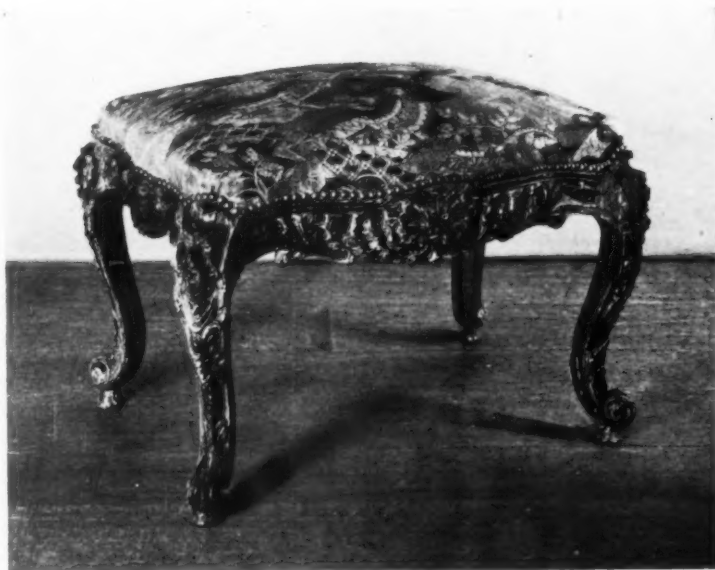


Fig. V. LOUIS XIV STOOL in carved wood with original gilding

accompanied by sprays of lilies, and a wreath of roses, decorates a commode made for the queen by Beneman in the Musée du Louvre.³ The case of the clock is flanked by cornucopias and surmounted by an ornamental finial of quivers and garlands. The clock was found by Mr. Pixley separated from the two vase candelabra, but the plinths of all three are identical. The body of the vase-candelabra is of white marble, with ormolu mounts and handles. The ormolu flower-sprays are fitted with candle sockets.

The movement of the clock is by Ferdinand Berthoud, *horlogier du roi* (1727-1807), a most eminent horologist and maker of clocks and watches, who wrote many books on hor-

ology and did much experimental work on time-keepers. He was clockmaker to the King of France and to the Marine. There are three examples of his work in the Wallace Collection, and a cartel clock by him in the *Mobilier National*.

Inlay dominates the decoration of the small commode (Fig. IV), which is veneered with tulipwood. Panels on the front and sides are inlaid with tall vases of flowers relieved against a dark rosewood ground. Rosewood also forms the ground of the frieze and the apron, and outlines the cabriole feet, which finish in claw shoes. The angles and apron are also mounted. This commode bears the stamp of Godefroy Dester, who was admitted to the *maîtrise* in 1774 and continued to work as late as 1790. Salverte was unable to give any particulars about Dester from archives, but the many pieces bearing his stamp are evidence of his taste and talent. "*Il produisit surtout des meubles légers, d'une charmante finesse.*"

The oval medallion in carved walnut (Fig. VI) is not rivalled by any contemporary carving of this period in the royal palaces. The original circular medallion framed by the carving had been removed when bought by Mr. Pixley, who inserted the small contemporary portrait in *gouche* of a lady with a harp. Above the portrait are grouped the emblematical quivers and turtle doves, and light drapery swags overflowing with foliage. Below is a richly carved narrow-necked vase filled with flowers, which, like the other *motifs*, are carved with the airy lightness of the period. There are two pendant trophies of musical and rustic implements.

In the cartel clock (Fig. III) of the Louis XV period the movement is by David Robert (1717-69) of Chaux-de-Fonds, son of Josué Robert, founder of the firm *J. Robert et fils*. David Robert is known as a "*très expert horloger*" and as the maker of "*toutes sortes de pendules curieuses.*" This and many of his clocks are signed *Robert l'ainé*.

A carved and gilt stool (Fig. V), which is earlier than the furniture in this collection, dates from the reign of Louis XIV. The frame is boldly carved with a formal shell and marks on the shoulder; the covering of pale green and silver brocade is contemporary.



Fig. VI. LOUIS XVI OVAL MEDALLION carved in walnut wood, with portrait in gouache

FRANK PARTRIDGE'S NEW PREMISES

Messrs. Frank Partridge and Sons, Ltd., of King Street, St. James's, whose galleries were so seriously damaged early in the year that they had to find temporary rooms at once, did so at 31 Bruton Street, where they were able to show some of their many pieces quite well in a limited space. They have now been fortunate in obtaining a lease of the wonderful premises at Nos. 144, 145 and 146 New Bond Street, which will enable them to display effectively their fine stock of English and French furniture, Chinese and English porcelain, tapestries, and every variety of the finest objects of art. The Galleries were previously occupied by Colnaghi and Co., Ltd., until the commencement of the war, and are in the centre of Bond Street. They occupy a large frontage and are five stories in height. Mr. Frank Partridge opened his first Gallery in King Street, St. James's, over forty years ago, and has had large galleries in New York for the last thirty-five. The New Galleries are very spacious, and will enable full justice being given to the beautiful antiques that the firm handles, as one of the ever-present difficulties with an antique dealer is to have sufficient space for every piece to be shown as it should be. King Street, with Christie's and other art dealers before they had to find fresh homes, was rather the art centre of London, so it will be, no doubt, somewhat difficult for Mr. Partridge to decide where finally to settle down when London is rebuilt.

¹ Salverte, "*Les ébénistes du XVIII^e siècle*," p. 284.

² "*Les ébénistes du XVIII^e siècle*," p. 91.

³ Illustrated in Pfior, "*Architecture, Decoration et Ameublement*, 1885, plate 39.

SOME REWARDS OF AN ASSIDUOUS COLLECTOR

BY H. T. KIRBY

IT is doubtful whether the rich collector ever enjoys the thrills experienced by his brother of straitened means. Not that the two types are really comparable, for whilst one haunts famous auction rooms or celebrated West End emporiums, the other is more familiar with the small broker's shop, the book-barrow or the open-air market. With a long purse it is reasonably easy to secure acknowledged art treasures—real pedigree stuff—penury, however, has to rely solely on his keen eye to detect worth amongst masses of unknown, uncatalogued junk. Yet, and we speak from experience, no millionaire can ever be happier with his Rembrandt or Corot than is Master Threadbare taking home some dusty picture or creased print. Once within doors begins that exciting, detailed examination which (he hopes) will confirm his diagnosis of genuine worth.

The writer is certainly not an art expert, but possesses—like most Englishmen—an acquisitive sense, and likes poking amongst the queer assortment of items lumped together in the average second-hand shop—preferably one situated in a provincial town. It is surprising the number of modest, but quite interesting bargains which can be secured in this way. During a summer holiday in a southern cathedral city, for instance, a visit was paid to a small bookseller-cum-broker's shop. The books were particularly uninteresting and the remainder of the stock unattractive, but in an upstairs room hung several framed and very dusty pictures. Two, however, looked quite good, and after being allowed to knock off the frames, the prints were rolled up and carried off at the price of tenpence each. At home, after careful application of bread-crumbs, both proved fascinating beyond the ordinary. The first was a line-engraving on copper of Rubens by Van Dyck, engraved by Pontius. It was exquisite work and obviously a choice impression, but only collectors will appreciate the thrill experienced when, on turning it over, we encountered the signature—in faded ink—of "P. Mairette"! For less than a shilling we had actually been fortunate enough to secure a print which had once graced the portfolio of a world-famous connoisseur and collector. Now, cleaned and in a new frame, "D. Petrus Paulus Rubbens Eques" (Ant. Van Dyck, pinxit. Paul Pontius, sculpsit.) not only visibly displays the skill of artist and engraver, but also fully justifies the hidden endorsement of Mairette.

Next came the other tenpennyworth. This was an aquatint, in brown, by Rowlandson, perfect except for a slight crease across one corner. Although untitled, it was quickly run to earth in Grego's massive bibliography—in which a reproduction is also given. As catalogued it reads: "Stage coach with basket: the Dolphin Inn." It is typically Rowlandson in treatment, by which is meant that it displays English life with humour, truth and considerable graphic skill. Mayhap the humour is somewhat broad, but truth is always preferable to expurgation, and as a period work alone the print is valuable. Grego's full note runs: "A scene of bustle and activity consequent upon the departure of a stage coach from a



PETER PAUL RUBENS

Line engraving by PONTIUS after VAN DYCK. "A print which graced the portfolio of a famous collector, secured for less than a shilling"

posting-house in a flourishing country town. From the business going on in the background it is evidently market-day. The coach is taking up its complement of passengers at the Dolphin Inn; the landlord of the house is civilly doing the honours of his establishment and conducting a party of new arrivals to the comforts of his hostelry."

Perhaps the greatest find ever made by the writer was one which cost exactly sixpence. For several days a water-colour drawing (in a dirty frame and on an almost dirtier mount) had been noticed hanging in a small broker's shop. The drawing was small, probably about 6 in. x 4 in., but a brilliant spot of colour caught the eye here and there. "Reminds one of Prout," mused the writer, but still ignored the item—as indeed did dozens of other passers-by—until one day, having a few moments to spare, the picture was closely examined. "It is Prout," was the mental verdict, and after some discussion it was taken away for the trifling expenditure mentioned above. Picture dealer friends were dubious. "It may

be Prout, of course, but we hardly think so," was the usual verdict. However, the matter was finally settled by sending the drawing to the curator of a well-known Art Gallery (one who had written much on the English School), and his verdict was "Certainly a genuine Prout," and worth roughly about a guinea for each copper we had paid for it.

Warwick Castle is familiar enough to scores of people other than the writer, and it was in a shop not far from its impressive bulk that another water-colour drawing was bought for three shillings and sixpence. Though the artist's name (T. Scandrett) was unfamiliar, enquiry revealed that he had been an architectural draughtsman of considerable ability who had exhibited on many occasions. Dated 1834, the subject was the interior of St. Stephen's, Wallbrook. How faithful the drawing was (allowing for certain minor alterations made since the artist's day) the writer discovered in 1938, when he was able to compare the drawing with the church itself. St. Stephen's is known to many by the fact that it is supposed to have been the church on which Wren first "tried out" his dome scheme for St. Paul's. Although now open again for public worship, the building suffered badly in the air-raids of



A ROWLANDSON Acquatint. "Tenpennyworth from a small bookseller-cum-broker in a Cathedral City"
Stage Coach with Basket. The Dolphin Inn

1941. Many artists have painted it, chief amongst whom should be named Charles Wild, who executed some excellent studies of the interior about 1810. There are (or were) other examples by various artists in the vestry. "Never was so sweet a kernel in so rough a shell" is often quoted when speaking of St. Stephen's. The



Water-colour by SAMUEL PROUT. "Perhaps the writer's greatest find, picked up in a broker's shop, at the cost of sixpence"



Water-colour by T. SCANDRETT, 1834.
"Bought for three shillings and sixpence in Warwick"

SOME REWARDS OF AN ASSIDUOUS COLLECTOR

statement is singularly true, for the somewhat ungainly exterior contrasts strangely with the beauty within.

Space will not allow mention of other "finds," but perhaps one more ought to be chronicled. It was during a very hot July afternoon (pre-war, of course) when wandering up and down the enormous expanse of Caledonian Market a short stay was made at a book-cum-picture stall. Looking through a portfolio of prints one was extracted depicting a white, shaggy bull, in all the glory of pawing hoof and slaving muzzle. No lover of Bewick could mistake its identity. It was his celebrated "Chillingham Bull," and as the price asked was only a shilling, it quickly changed hands. South Kensington afterwards vetted it as genuine, but even if it had been a facsimile we should still have found it attractive enough to keep. The history of this cut is given in most works of Bewick (mainly built on the author's own story in his "Memoir" of 1862), and the record mentions the great difficulty the artist had in approaching his subject near enough to make a drawing. Eventually a solitary animal—one which had been driven off from the main herd—had to be selected, and the subsequent study is supposed to be an exceptionally realistic drawing of a member of this rare and fast-diminishing breed.

Even when engraved, the print had a most unfortunate history. When but a few copies had been taken, the block—left carelessly in the sun—split, and though subsequently clamped together, the later pulls were never completely satisfactory. Impressions on vellum are



CHILLINGHAM BULL

Woodcut by THOMAS BEWICK

"It quickly changed hands for one shilling in the Caledonian Market.
No lover of Bewick could mistake its identity"

valuable and have been sold for as much as £50. For Bewick the cut is very large in size, and though technically excellent, most lovers of his art will prefer those tiny tail-pieces scattered throughout the pages of the "Birds," "Quadrupeds," and "Fables" in such lavish profusion.

If there is a moral to this slight discursion, it is, the writer supposes, that poverty (or relative poverty, anyway), far from being unenviable, is at times a most exhilarating experience!

THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

(Continued from page 9)

can be compared with Shakespeare, but if he can it is only because he writes like Shaw and not like Shakespeare. I do not know whether it is impertinent to compare Stanley Spencer with the Fra Angelico; but if it is not then it is only because Stanley paints as of Cookham and not as of Vespignano. But Stanley is too near to us, we cannot yet see his "art" in objective relation; and by objective relation I mean one that does not affect us personally. We want to argue with him. We want to tell him, perhaps, that our idea of Christ or of the Judgment Day is not his. That has ceased to weigh with us when we contemplate the work of the monk of St. Mark's, or of Rubens or Rembrandt for that matter. Similarly, we do not get as excited by Claude as Turner was, still less do we get as excited by Turner as were his contemporaries. We see him in objective relation to "Landscape Art." But when Mr. Ivon Hitchens paints a "Hazelwood" or Mr. Graham Sutherland a Tree Trunk, we want to argue with them. We want to tell them that it is not *our* idea of such things, or perhaps, on the contrary, we want to praise them because their landscapes are so peculiarly theirs, unlike anyone else's. That, too, is irrelevant. There is no virtue in being

"original"; that is inevitable—we all are—for better or for worse. What we need is sufficient distance from the artist—distance in time—to become detached. If there is one thing certain it is that posterity will revise our judgment of our contemporaries. Reputations as they stand to-day will not so stand in the future. Some will be confirmed, others will be repudiated, and yet others, of which we have no cognizance to-day, will be discovered—probably by the next-but-one generation.

None of these considerations apply to "other walks of life," or, at all events, not to the skill of scientists. There is no arguing about aeroplanes, for example; there is no question that the aeroplane of Ader, or the Brothers Wright was either as efficient or as "beautiful" as a *Spitfire* or *Thunderbolt*; and the "beauty" of the Lord Mayor's coach is incompatible with that of a Rolls Royce. Only an eccentric would prefer to travel in the *Cutty Sark* because it was more *beautiful* than the *Normandie*, say. There is no room for comparison in our standards of judgment. Or is there?

Our *skill* in making engines of destruction is almost miraculous; but we seem to have lost the *art* of living. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder—but, at the moment, we can find it only with our eyes shut and our minds on an *imagined* past.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor,
APOLLO Magazine.

Dear Sir,

In her article on her very interesting discovery of a signed drawing by Sprimont, in your number of May-June (p. 134), Mrs. Esdaile states that she "had already discovered that the pattern was also known in Chelsea China, and that a specimen of it from the Herbert Allen collection in the V. and A. is illustrated in the Catalogue, where it is said to be based on a silver pattern." Though no further details as to title, page reference, etc., are given, the reference can only be to the official "Catalogue of the Herbert Allen Collection," of which the second and last edition was published in 1923. In the interests of accurate record, it should be pointed out, on behalf of the Museum authorities, that there is no mention in this catalogue of a dish described as being "based on a silver pattern," and that the only dishes with vine-pattern in relief illustrated or mentioned therein are two unmarked pairs (Nos. 77, 78, on p. 24), included under Chelsea with the express caution that "their attribution to Chelsea is somewhat uncertain." They are of a class of which the Derby origin was then already beginning to be suspected and soon after gained general acceptance.

May I also be allowed to point out what is doubtless a printer's error, on p. 135—"Sloane Museum" for "Soane Museum"—which would be of trifling significance were it not for the fact that connections have been proved between Sir Hans Sloane and the Chelsea factory. Also, in view of the very complex make-up of the Chelsea porcelain paste, one would hesitate to agree that "the Chelsea figures . . . are only glazed terra-cotta after all"; and seeing that there were in the neighbourhood many other pottery kilns such as those of Fulham and Lambeth, to which Roubiliac and Rysbrack could have sent their clay models for firing, can it really be said that it is "certain" that the Chelsea factory "played a most important part in baking their clay models into terra-cotta"?

Yours faithfully,

BERNARD RACKHAM.

June 2, 1944.

Dear Sir,

Your idea of giving bibliographies of various branches of art is a good one. But a library, like a collection, needs weeding out occasionally. Many of the earlier works on English porcelain are out of date, their attributions incorrect, and their value little.

One assumes that the collector whose library was listed in the February APOLLO, is primarily—if not entirely—interested in English china.

But a general interest in old porcelain would require a wider range of material. In answering similar inquiries, it seems advisable to me to add to the standard books on English china the following, as essential to a comprehensive understanding of the subject:

- E. S. Auscher, "French Porcelain" (Trans. by W. Burton).
 - E. Zimmerman, "Meissner Porzellan."
 - F. H. Hoffman, "Frankenthaler Porzellan."
 - Folnesics and Braun, *Der K-K* (Vienna), "Porzellan Manufaktur."
 - G. Lukomskij, "Russisches Porzellan."
 - F. H. Hoffman, "Europäische Porzellan des Bayerischen," National Museum (for Nymphenburg).
- And also, the following for figures only:
- Wm. King, "English Porcelain Figures of the XVIIIth Century."
 - V. and A. Museum, "A Picture Book of English Porcelain Figures."
 - H. Christ, "Ludwigsburger Porzellan Figures."
 - M. Sauerlandt, "Deutsche Porzellan figures des XVIII Jahrhunderts."
 - O. Von Falke, "Deutsche Porzellan figures."

Some of these are in German but easily translated, and pictures are pictures in any language. Dealers in books on art subjects or book-dealers with art book departments should have them.

Congratulations on your excellent idea.

I am, very truly yours,

WARREN CLEMENTS.

4607 North Meridian Avenue,
Miami Beach, Florida.
April 17, 1944.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

I have a very old and coloured Map of the British Isles, very decorative, with the place names in Latin. It has been cut out of a book entitled "Theatri Orbis Terrarum," by Ortelius, and it is dated 1595. There are three lots of inscriptions in medallion form, and one is inscribed with the words: *Natalibus ingenio et doctrina illustri reverendoque Domino D. Georgio ab Austria, Praeposito Harlebe, censi ac Sereniss Principi Cardinali Archiduci a Cubiculis. Abrah. Ortelius. R.M. Goeg. L. M. Dedicab.*

Maps dated 1595 belong to the later edition of Ortelius' work. There are several copies about. Ortelius started work about 1570, and that early work is scarce and is very valuable.

Brookes (Chesham). You are probably correct in assigning the teapot you have seen to Castleford. I confess I was not sure that Castleford ever used painted landscapes as decoration; but I find, on referring to Mr. C. Marshall, Hon. Advisory Curator to the local museum, that such was the case in rare instances. Mr. Marshall has a jug in his collection similar in shape to that illustrated in APOLLO for February, which bears a painted landscape, and he mentions teapots as sometimes so decorated instead of the more usual classical groups. You may be interested to know that Mr. Marshall regards the plain cream, uncoloured pieces as the rarest.

J. G. (Rotherham). It is not possible to identify a piece by the similarity of decoration with an authenticated specimen. You must remember that decorators frequently moved from factory to factory, either in search of better pay or for some other reason; naturally continuing the same style of work or using the same patterns. There were also "outside enamellers" like Duesbury, in London, who decorated in colours white models from any factory that sent them. No, to identify, the decoration must be confirmed by similarity of paste and glaze, etc.

Stubbs (Orrell). If you have any old art and collectors' magazines, you will find it interesting to compare the prices paid for pottery and porcelain with those given in APOLLO each month. Present prices are high and likely to increase, in my opinion. Many valuable specimens must have been destroyed in air-raids, and in the years between the war of 1914-1918 and the present conflict, many pieces were purchased and sent to America.

Baker (Stockport). Your jug of cream ware bearing a sea battle scene and entitled "Constitution and Guerriere," is probably of Liverpool manufacture. On August 19, 1812, the American frigate made contact and fought for two hours, the British *Guerriere*. The latter was disabled, losing 79 men killed and wounded. It is curious how often, in the interests of trade, the British potters recorded American victories over ships of their own country. Evidently sales to America after the war were many and the pocket ruled over patriotism!

Conning (Birmingham). I quite agree that the collector would be helped (and incidentally, the dealer also in all probability) by the advertiser placing prices to his illustrated wares. This is done by some in the issues preceding Christmas, as assistance in choosing presents for that season of gifts; and I do not see why it should not be done as a regular addition to advertisement. Perhaps the Editor will pass on your suggestion?

D. R. (Amersham). Masonic emblems have often been used in transfer decoration, but generally these pieces have been for presentation, perhaps to some prominent Mason. These emblems are to be found on many different makes of pottery including even lustre ware.

Markham (Bolton). The potter's wheel is of ancient but obscure origin and the inventor must remain unknown. The early Grecian vases show traces of the lines caused by the wheel, and Athens has been given as the birthplace of this ingenious implement; but its origin is probably much earlier. Like many other inventions, it has been credited to the Chinese, to have penetrated into Egypt from China and so to the Continent. Pictures of the wheel appear in the tombs at Thebes which indicates an early use of this useful aid to the potter's art.

H. B. M. (Newcastle). The name of Joseph Mayer, the potter of Hanley, is not to be confused with that of Joseph Mayer, author of "History of the Art of Pottery in Liverpool," 1855. The latter was, I believe, a jeweller in Lord Street, Liverpool, and a great collector, to whom we are indebted for much of our knowledge of the local potters. He left so much to the Liverpool Museum that his name is perpetuated in the title, The Mayer Museums. Joseph Mayer & Co., Hanley, made parian, a transparent stoneware, and earthenware services.

LATE FEE TRANS-ATLANTIC MAIL

BY MAJOR W. H. TAPP, M.C.

ALMOST up to the opening of hostilities in the Great War, philatelists had not commenced a study of envelopes bearing the different postal markings. Stamps had been soaked off their covers and sold to the dealers in the rather lifeless sort of a condition of all off-cover stamps, although, of course, they lend themselves much more readily to inspection in that form, besides having other advantages; consequently covers bearing the trans-Atlantic late fee mark are rare, and they carry a considerable value to the real student philatelist.

It is perhaps to Mr. Robson Lowe in this country, and to Mr. Stanley Ashbrook and Dr. Babcock in the U.S.A. that we owe most for their efforts to inspire the public with the educational, historical and geographical knowledge lying latent in a study of such covers! It applies to all countries, and offers attractive possibilities.

The writer has, for example, an almost complete history of the war in the Shenandoah, or Long Valley, as it was called in the North and South War in America, derived from a study of covers. Further, it shows what Jackson was up to at Harper's Ferry whilst Lee was pressing further north towards Washington. It shows the training of one man who became an officer of note, and it records this man's return to his original firm in New York within three months of the signing of the armistice. All these letters are written between this officer and his wife, and cost little in the collecting, but gave an infinite amount of interest and research.

The initiation of a late fee Trans-Atlantic mail service in the U.S.A. is recorded in a letter written by the Hon. James Campbell, Postmaster-General, to the Postmaster at New York, dated July 7, 1853.

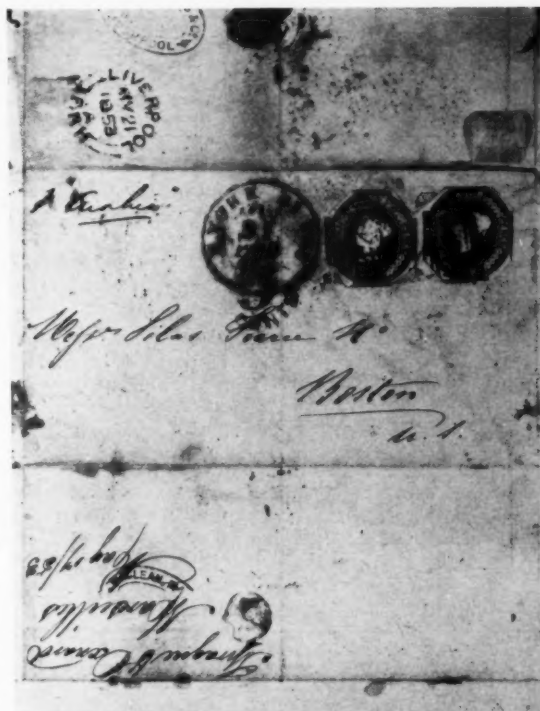


Fig. I. The first Liverpool Floating Receiving House stamp used in England. May 21, 1852



Fig. II. Earliest known use of stamps to pay supplementary fee, May 14, 1859. Courtesy Grace Stamp Co., New York

"Sir,

Your suggestions of yesterday's date with reference to the plan proposed in my letter to you of the 2nd inst., for receiving letters up to moment of sailing of the European Steamers, at double rates of postage, are approved, and you will proceed to carry them into effect.

"In conversation here, some weeks since, Mr. Riggs, one of the Directors of the New York and Liverpool United States Mail Steamship Company, remarked that he thought their company would be prepared to provide, free of expense, a room to make up the mails in their office upon the wharf.

(Signed) James Campbell,
P.M.G."

However, no cover is known previous to 1859 which carries the New York Supplementary Mail

marking, and it has therefore been assumed that before that date no hand stamp had been introduced. Only patient research will prove whether there is any foundation for the assumption.

It appears quite possible that all those covers bearing the Supplementary Mail marking on the cover itself and not tying the stamp were so stamped at the New York or other Port Post Offices, against the payment of the fee in cash, and all those with the mark cancelling the stamp, from either the ship Post Office or the shipping company's office at the quayside.

There are less than twenty genuine covers known with this mark. It is struck in a very distinctive shade of brick-red and is always fragmentary.

Mr. Stanley Ashbrook, who is one of the leading authorities in the U.S.A., considers that some of the stamps bearing this mark may be forgeries because, for one reason, at all events, he believes that the proportion of off-cover stamps to those on cover is too great, but as these amount to no more than 100 at most recorded at the time of writing, this, under the circumstances, is a most reasonable proportion, and the forgeries, for example, in different colours, are easily detectable.

All these covers prior to 1771 indicate that the fee was paid in cash, but later ones occasionally show the fee paid in stamps, so that somewhere about the year 1869 the rules seem to have been altered, if, indeed, there ever were any.

Fig. I is an illustration of the front and reverse of a letter forwarded from Marseilles by the agents, Messrs. McLean Morris & Co. of Liverpool, to Boston.

It is dated May 21, 1852, and on the reverse side is the



Fig. IV. The top cover arrived too late for the ordinary mail and bears the supplementary mail stamp; the lower arrived in time for the ordinary mailbag and has no extra stamping



Fig. III. Two covers from the Pacific Mills, Boston. The top one with normal stamping and marked "short paid," the lower shows the supplementary fee paid

Liverpool F.R.H. stamp (Floating Receiving House), and this is the first stamp used for a late shipping fee in England.

A hut was built on the South Landing Quay at Liverpool in 1849 to be used as a reception office for all letters which arrived after the sealing of the ordinary ship's mail.

Mr. Hendy, in his "History of the British Postmarks," states that this office was actually opened on August 18 of that year, which seems a little on the early side, as Samuel Cunard did not receive his mail contract until the following year.

It is said, however, that the service was much appreciated by the business men of Liverpool and was much patronized, and it continued in operation until October, 1864, when all late letters were picked up at Queenstown, County Cork.

The fee, payable in cash or stamps at the option of the sender, was 1s., which happened to equal the trans-Atlantic postal charge for the $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. letter during the whole period of its existence.

Fig. II illustrates the earliest of the covers with the fee paid in stamps. It is dated May 14, 1859, and is franked with a block of five three-cent stamps of the 1857-61 issue, which was the correct single rate between France and the U.S.A. according to the Postal Treaty of April 1, 1857.

There is no question here but that the fee must have been paid in cash, and the supplementary mail stamping is very clearly shown.

The New York circular cancellation shows "PAID 6 May 14," and the notation at the top of the cover shows that it travelled by German Lloyd steamer *Bremen*

LATE FEE TRANS-ATLANTIC MAIL

directly to Calais, for which the fee was 9 cents, the reservation at New York being 3 cents to U.S.A. P.O.D., and the balance 3 cents credit to the French P.O.D.

All the postal treaties made with European countries, Great Britain, or other areas involved accounting for every single letter until 1868.

It is known that San Francisco and some other Pacific ports, San Juan, and possibly Boston also, were entitled to forward Supplementary Mail letters, but so far the field is open to students, as no early markings have been identified.

Fig. III illustrates two covers from Boston from the author's collection. Both are written from Pacific Mills, Lawrence, Mass. The first of these left Boston October 20, 1865, by American Packet and has a reservation of 3 cents to Great Britain P.O.D., and is in every way completely normal, but the other, besides the franking by the 24 cent stamp, is marked in brick-red (in an almost exactly similar shade to the New York supplementary mail) with a large PAID/24, and is most decidedly, in my opinion, a letter on which the supplementary fee had been paid, because there is no other reason that can be assigned to account for this extra PAID marking, especially as had it been over the $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. weight allowed it would surely have been marked SHORT PAID as in the first cover.

I am sure that this illustration and the accompanying remarks will cause some interest in the United States. There are many over there who spend much time unravelling the hidden mysteries of such covers and their markings.

Fig. IV illustrates a fine pair of covers from Messrs. Shelton of Santiago, Cuba, which travelled via their agents in New York to Messrs. Englehard of Fenchurch Street, in the City of London. The first of these covers depicts one despatched on September 8, 1872, which arrived too late for the ordinary ship's mail and paid and bears the stamp of the supplementary mail. The second cover, despatched some six weeks later, caught the ordinary ship's mailbag before closing, and is in every way normal.

Fig. V shows a cover franked with a pair of six cent stamps of the 1870 U.S.A. issue printed by National Bank Note Company. Note the emphasis on "a pair of," for by the U.S.A./G.B. Postal Treaty of January 1, 1870, the trans-Atlantic rates of postage had been reduced to 6 cents per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., and, as a consequence, whoever paid the cash over the counter at the old General Post Office, at what is now City Hall Station, must at the same time have paid for the supplementary fee, otherwise the letter would have been franked with two 6 cent stamps and not a pair.

The cover is also remarkable for the New York circular date stamp in red—AUG. 9. PAID ALL—which obviously also indicates that both fees had been paid at one and the same time, and were positively paid in stamps and not in cash.

Therefore some time previous to the writing of this letter, August 9, 1871, the requirements demanding cash, if they indeed ever existed, had been altered, permitting also the payment of this fee in stamps.

Owing to the paucity of the evidence regarding these



Fig. V. Both postage and supplementary fee paid by stamps. Date circular date stamp, "Aug. 9—Paid all" Babcock collection

supplementary mail regulations and also evidence in the form of covers and off cover stamps it has been assumed that, contrary to definite knowledge that we have over here, the service was much appreciated in Liverpool, although we have almost an equal paucity of evidence as regards covers carrying the F.R.H. mark, that the service was not in much use at New York and caused little satisfaction to that city's business men. I am not of that opinion because New York business men are in the forefront regarding trade and means to further it, and would certainly not have boggled at the extra fee, and that the real reason for the scarcity is to be found in the fact that so few firms or individuals retained any but the most important letters together with their envelopes, in exactly the same manner as to-day, although who may say what the value of a modern stamped trans-Atlantic cover at the height of the U-boat campaign may not be in a hundred years' time?

If further evidence be required it is readily to hand in the creation of the express mails from New Orleans on the demand of the business men of that city in 1836, so that they might be up to date with their knowledge of values according to world markets.

An express mail service between New Orleans and New York did most certainly entail many perils of the road and human sacrifices in energy, quite apart from the geographical difficulties which had to be overcome.

This particular mail was charged triple rates, but still the President of the Chamber of Commerce in New York stated of it, "The Express Mail is admirably calculated to benefit the commercial interests of the country."

The usual time taken over the Great Overland Route to New York was twenty-four days at this period in U.S.A. history, and the Express Mail route via Washington reduced it to about twelve days, on the average, or some 110 miles *per diem*.

There remains a great deal of interesting research awaiting the philatelic student.

ARMORIAL BEARINGS

Readers who may wish to identify British armorial bearings on portraits, plate or china, should send a full description and a photograph or drawing, or, in the case of silver, a careful rubbing. IN NO CASE MUST THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE BE SENT. No charge is made for replies.

SALE ROOM PRICES

Prices obtained by every kind of work of art in the Sale Rooms, particularly pictures, silver, porcelains and furniture, continue to soar beyond what one would ever have anticipated in these terrible days of war. However, apparently, there is no reason to believe that the upward trend should cease. Fortunately, it is understood that British collectors are the largest buyers of the rarest and finest examples, many of which will, no doubt, be bequeathed in due course to the nation and the great public galleries throughout the country.

April 19 and 20. Furniture. April 26 and 27. Silver. ROBINSON AND FOSTERS (at New Rooms, Queensberry Hall, Kensington): carved knee-hole writing-table, £50; Sheraton banded shaped front sideboard, £61; set twelve Heppelwhite design chairs, £126; satinwood Carlton House writing-table, £61; antique oak cupboard, £61; satinwood and decorated shaped front wardrobe, £84; William III 11-in. circular Monteth by Thomas Parr, £340; George I two-handled cup and cover, 12 in., £440; Geo. II Epergne by Samuel Courtald, 1751, £340; cup and cover, 1742, £115; potato ring, Stephen Walsh of Dublin, £50; and some very fine jewellery which went at high figures but are impossible to describe effectively.

April 20 and 21. Ceramics and Antiquities from the Far East, and English Furniture, SOTHEBY'S: Chun Yao lotus bud water pot, £60; pair yellow ground jars, XVIIth century wood covers, £125; pair Chinese pictures on silk Ch'ing Dynasty, £56; massive jade lion, possibly Ming, £90; early libation cup, XVIII-XIXth century, Ming, £60; a celebrated dish with the Chinese dancing figure, Rayy, XI-XIIth century, £185; interesting group in bronze of St. Peter and St. Paul, IV-Vth century, found in Rome some twenty-five years ago, £240; Queen Anne gesso mirror, £118; William and Mary side table, £54; Chippendale wardrobe, £78; Heppelwhite commode, fitted with four drawers, £95; Queen Anne stick barometer, £82; William and Mary chairs, four, after style of Marot, £88; Queen Anne stool, £110; XVIIIth century secretaire bookcase, £90; pair Chippendale chairs, uncommon, £140; four various Chippendale mahogany chairs, the last an arm, £80, £48, £40 and £66; XVIIIth century settee, £68; XVIIIth century sideboard, serpentine, £75; XVIIIth century inlaid sideboard, £96; early XVIIIth century wardrobe, fitted, £150; Chippendale coffee table, £52; XVIIIth century walnut chest, £55; pair XVIIth century giltwood chairs, of William Kent, £115; early XVIIIth century walnut kneehole writing-table, £80.

April 28. Pictures and Drawings, CHRISTIE'S: pictures—Birds, usual, M. d'Hondecoeter, signed, £210; Monkey and Cat, F. Snyders, £94; Interior, Ducq, £189. Drawings—*Les Tindelys sur Seine*, Bonington, £294; three by Cotman, The Elm Aree, £136; Kirby Bedon, £178; *Clanberry*, £84; The Abbots Barn, T. Girtin, £71; *Going to Market*, De Wint, £189.

May 3. Furniture, etc., ROBINSON AND FOSTER, at Queensberry Hall, South Kensington: Queen Anne walnut bureau, £46; walnut bureau with fall front, £54; Sheraton mahogany bow-front sideboard, £92; mahogany serpentine front chest, on bracket feet, £94.

May 4. Decorative Furniture and Porcelains, CHRISTIE'S: pair Derby Chelsea candlesticks, 10½ in., £194; old Worcester vase, square mark, £68; Worcester dinner service, £241; pair Dresden figures, negro and negress, £99; another pair seated by oval baskets and covers, £162; set Dresden chessmen, £210; Chas. II workbox, £110; pair Chippendale armchairs, covered Mortlake tapestry, £68; oak table, Elizabethan design, £141; Jacobean oak court cupboard, £173.

May 5. Silver, CHRISTIE'S: Queen Anne tankard, Nath. Locks, 1712, £81; pair square waiters, Elizabeth Godfrey, 1745, £88; Queen Anne coffee pot, Joseph Ward, 1704, £150; an Irish tazza, Joseph Walker, Dublin, 1703, £260; sugar basin and cover, 1730, £82; Scandinavian tankard, XVIIth century, £110.

May 17 and 18. Old French Furniture, and English Furniture from important collections, CHRISTIES: the two days' sale totalled nearly twenty thousand pounds: Louis XV small marquetry table, 16 in., £73; another stamped, 19½ in., £115; another, but with hinged top enclosing mirror and writing slide, wonderfully inlaid, £546; Louis XV marquetry table, with three drawers, £115; and one stamped J. Dubois, £157; another small oval table, stamped, £68; and a marquetry one, stamped G. Dester, £78; and a further one, 19 in., £84; Louis XVI writing table, G. Dester, £82; and two more, £142 and £168; Louis XVI marquetry commode, mounted with ormolu corners, etc., £421;

Louis XVI marquetry commode, J. L. Cosson, £152; set of three Empire mahogany cupboards, with a drawer in the frieze and doors below, etc., £1,050; suite of Louis XVI furniture, twenty-eight pieces, £420; pair Louis Fauteuils (the same were purchased by the first Duke of Sutherland, in Paris, 1790), £1,050; two Gobelins oval panels, £147; portraits of Henri IV and Duke of Orleans, collection of French historical painted portrait miniatures, in albums, believed to have formed part of the famous Lenoir collection, £1,050; another remarkable one of English historical portrait miniatures executed in water-colours, including memoirs of the court of Queen Elizabeth, the actual pictures numbering one hundred and thirty, £1,250; Chippendale mahogany knee-hole writing-table, £483; ten walnut chairs, Queen Anne design, £199; pair Louis XVI candelabra, £173; Louis XVI marquetry commode, semi-circular shape, £283; Chippendale mahogany wardrobe, illustrated in the Director, £317; panel Brussels tapestry, XVIIth century, £178; and two panels XVIIIth century, £262; panel Flemish, XVIIth century, £162; three panels Mortlake, £304; panel Flemish early XVIIth, £105; and one XVth century, £137; panel Aubusson, XVIIIth century, £82; panel Italian embroidery, XVIIth century from wonderful sources, but fetched only £92; panel old French needlework, £84. Second day: Sheraton toilet mirror, £168; pair Geo. I walnut armchairs, with Soho tapestry, £693; Chippendale mahogany settee, with double back pierced with trellis-work, £472; twelve mahogany chairs, Chippendale design, £105; Chippendale mahogany side table, 4 ft. 6 in., £283; and a wonderful Chippendale show cabinet, four glass doors on stand with six drawers, £588; Queen Anne walnut cabinet, £126; walnut show cabinet, £105; Queen Anne small walnut bureau, £173; and a Queen Anne walnut chest of five drawers, £178; pair mahogany show cabinets, French taste, £110.

May 17, 18 and 24. Furniture, ROBINSON AND FOSTER, at Queensberry Hall, South Kensington: Square back settee, £59; Chesterfield suite of three pieces and two chairs, £126; walnut table, sideboard and 6 chairs, walnut, £268; walnut writing table, or desk, £142; old English break-front bookcase, £63; Queen Anne walnut bureau bookcase, £283.

May 19. Old English silver, CHRISTIE'S: Jeypore octagonal gold box, £135; fluted coffee pot, 1753, £66; eight circular salt cellars, I. Pinking, 1733-34, £210; oval soup tureen and cover, Thomas Gilpin, 1741, and Paul Storr, 1834, £100; four sauceboats, Samuel Courtald, 1753, £90; oil and vinegar frame, Paul Lamerie, 1733, £110; pair tub-shaped ice pails, with the Royal arms, 1791, £100; set of eight table candlesticks, W. Cripps, 1744, £145; set four table candlesticks, John Romer, 1770; and pair candelabra *en suite*, Thomas Heming, 1769, £250; pair candelabra, French design, John Perry, 1757, £200; set four William and Mary candlesticks, 1694, £360; set William and Mary three tazze, 1694, £175.

May 19. English Porcelain, Pottery and Furniture, SOTHEBY'S: Ralph Wood—figure, the Sweep, £46; and a Toby, 10 in., £42; Figure of Venus, £46; and another Toby, £57; and a marked group of the St. George and Dragon, impressed mark, Ra. Wood, Burslem, £96; and one of Grief or Charlotte, £44; and one of the Shepherd or the lost sheep, £88; one of the Roman Charity, £67; Crown Derby dessert service, £68; Chippendale mirror, 6 ft. 4 in., £105; pair Chippendale card tables, £220; set eight uncommon Chippendale chairs, in mahogany, with contemporary needle work, £850; XVIIIth century mahogany pedestal desk, £152; Regency sofa or writing table in mahogany, £105; set six mahogany dining chairs in Gothic mahogany Chippendale style, £92; Queen Anne black and gold lacquered cabinet in two parts, £60; walnut and feather banded writing table in William and Mary style, £190; red lacquer cabinet in Queen Anne style, £75; Sheraton mahogany sideboard, £80; early XVIIth century oak court cupboard, £100; set six XVIIth century Heppelwhite chairs, £135; interesting set six Chippendale mahogany dining chairs, moulded feet united by stretchers, £270.

May 23. Final portion of the wonderful Gautier collection of Delft, PUTTICK AND SIMPSON: three Bristol blue chargers, £11; pair Urbino ewers and vase, £9; four Lambeth puzzle jugs, £10; ninety aubergine and blue tiles, various, £14.

May 26. Pictures and Drawings, CHRISTIE'S: Drawings—two by Birkett Foster, The Alhambra, £163; Gathering Blackberries, £163; two by T. M. Richardson, The Jungfrau, £73, Lake Como, £184; Blackcock and Grouse in Flight, Archibald Thorburn, £73. Pictures—The Battle of Camperdown, T. Whitcombe, £105; Fox-hunting, Ben Herring, £220; The River Llugwy, B. W. Leader, £142; Portrait of Bianca-Cappella, £84; View of Queen Square, Bloomsbury, E. Dayes, £262.